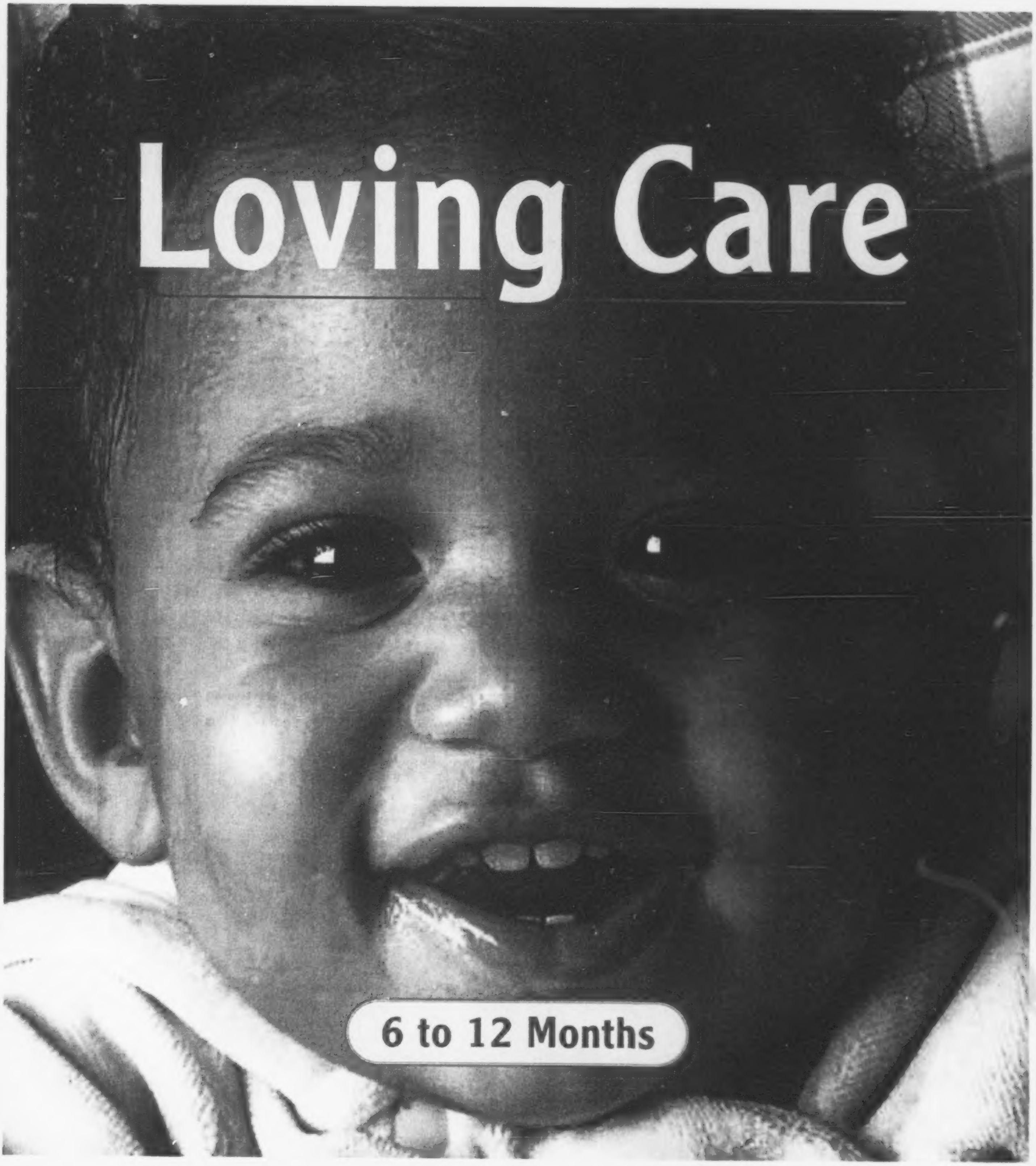
Loving Care



6 to 12 Months

Loving Care: 6 to 12 Months

Loving Care is a series of four booklets for parents of children from birth to age 3 developed by Nova Scotia's Department of Health Promotion and Protection. As a public health resource, Loving Care focuses on information that will help young families to protect, promote, or improve their health, and to prevent illness, injury or disability.

The information in this book is up-to-date date as of the date of printing. This information is not a substitute for the advice of a health professional.

Loving Care: 6 Months to 1 Year was developed by the Parent Health Education Resource Working Group:

- Jennifer Macdonald, (Co-Chair), Provincial Health Educator, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Rose Couch, (Co-chair), Early Childhood Coordinator—Healthy Development, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Bonnie Anderson, Public Health Nutritionist, Capital District Health Authority
- Kim Arcon, Community Home Visitor, Southwest Nova, Annapolis Valley, and South Shore District Health Authorities
- Sue Arsenault, Public Health Nurse, Pictou County Health Authority
- Audrey Caldwell, Public Health Nurse, Capital District Health Authority
- Alice de la Durantaye, Community Outreach Worker, Southwest Nova District Health Authority
- Susan DeWolf, Family Support Worker, Extra Support for Parents Volunteer Service, IWK Health Centre
- Sherry MacDonald, Public Health Nurse, Guysborough/Antigonish/Strait & Cape Breton District Health Authorities
- Sarah Melanson, Early Childhood Consultant, Public Health Services, Capital District Health Authority
- Annette Ryan, Perinatal Nurse Consultant, Reproductive Care Program of Nova Scotia
- Tina Swinamer, Coordinator, Early Childhood Nutrition, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Shelley Thompson, Coordinator, Child Care Centres Policy & Program Development, Department of Community Services

Writing: Janis Wood Catano, Easy-to-Read Writing
Design: Derek Sarty, GaynorSarty
Photography: Shirley Robb, Communications Nova Scotia; Peter Barss; Margo Gesser

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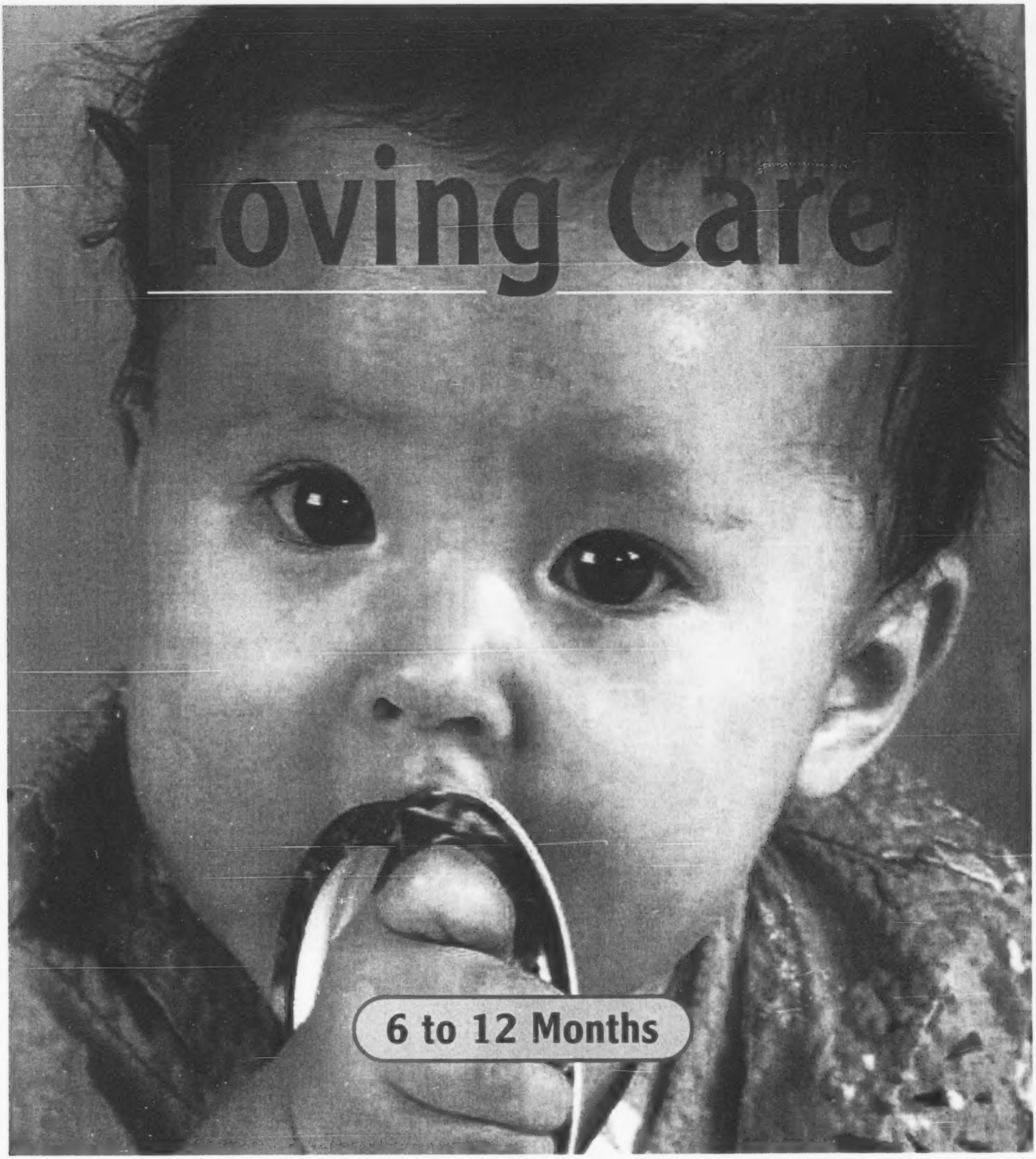
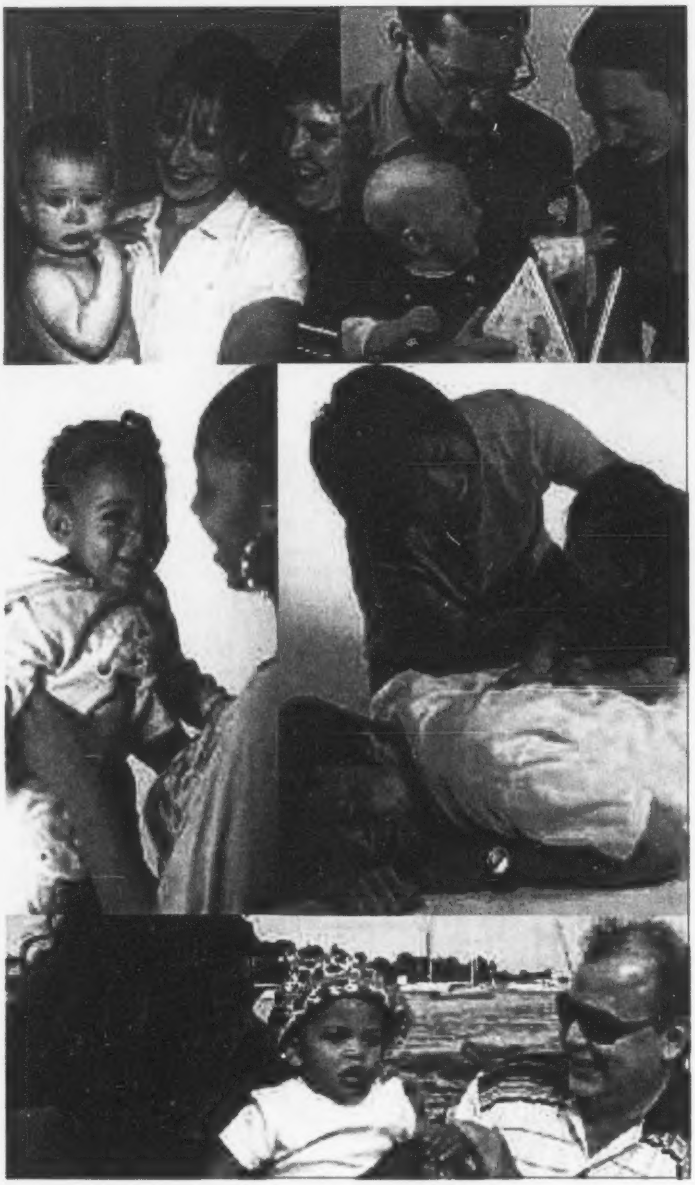
Loving Care



6 to 12 Months

Introduction



Loving care is what every baby needs. It's what every parent wants to give.

Loving Care is also the title of this series of booklets for parents. Each booklet gives information based on the age of your baby or child. We try to answer the questions you'll have as your tiny newborn grows into a busy toddler. This booklet gives you information about your baby from age 6 to 12 months.

The information in all of the **Loving Care** booklets applies mainly to healthy, full-term babies.

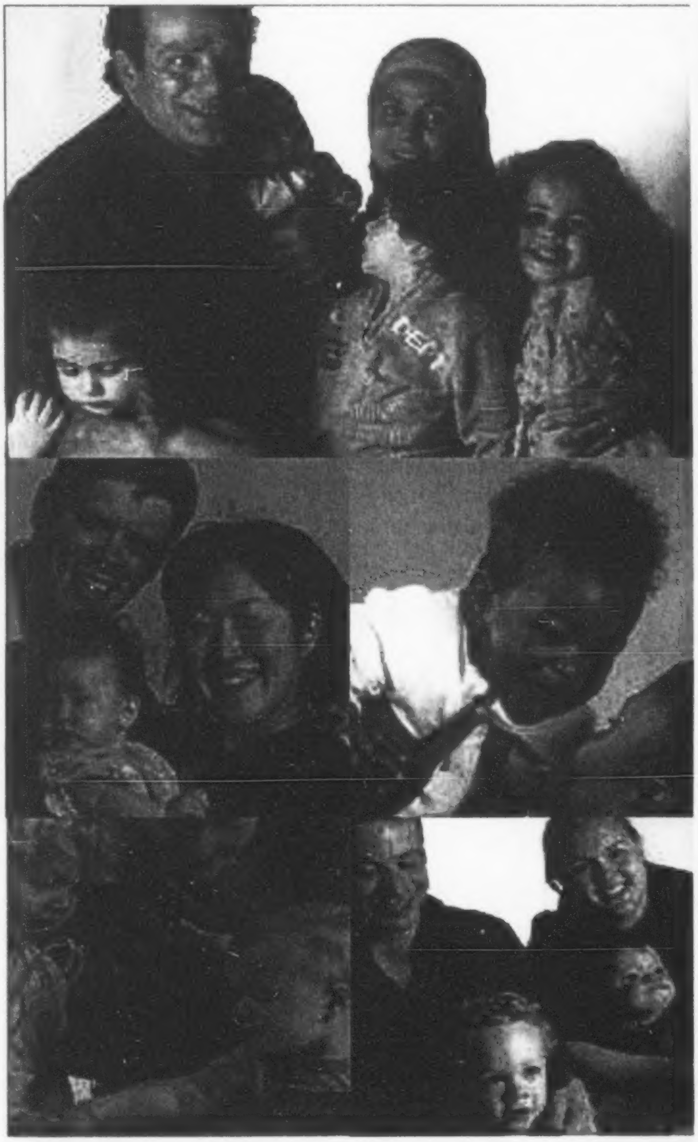
Babies are born into and raised by many kinds of families. You may be young or an older parent. You may be on your own, married or in a relationship. You may be gay, lesbian, transgender or straight. You may have lots of family around or you may be far from home. You may be a parent by birth or adoption. You may be a foster parent. You may have one baby, or two, or more!

All babies need love and care. All kinds of parents and all kinds of families can give babies the love and care they need.

Added info...

If your baby is premature or has special needs, you'll still find these books helpful. However, you may want to look for more information from other sources.

Life is a journey of discovery that you and your baby are taking together. No parent starts out having all the answers.



All parents have hopes and dreams for their baby. They wonder if they'll be a good a parent, if they'll know what to do. Becoming a parent is the start of a relationship between you and your baby that lasts forever. You grow and learn as a parent by watching and listening to your baby. Your baby grows and learns with your love and support.

Life is a journey of discovery that you and your baby are taking together. No parent starts out having all the answers. Every day brings something new. You and your baby will both discover new skills and new strengths as you go along.

We hope these booklets will help you on your journey and will help you to make your own decisions about what's best for you and your family.

Double Check

Don't forget about **Loving Care: Parents and Families.** It contains information that will continue to be helpful as your baby grows.

He or she?

In this book, we take turns using "he" or "she." Please know that whichever word we use, the information applies to both boys and girls.

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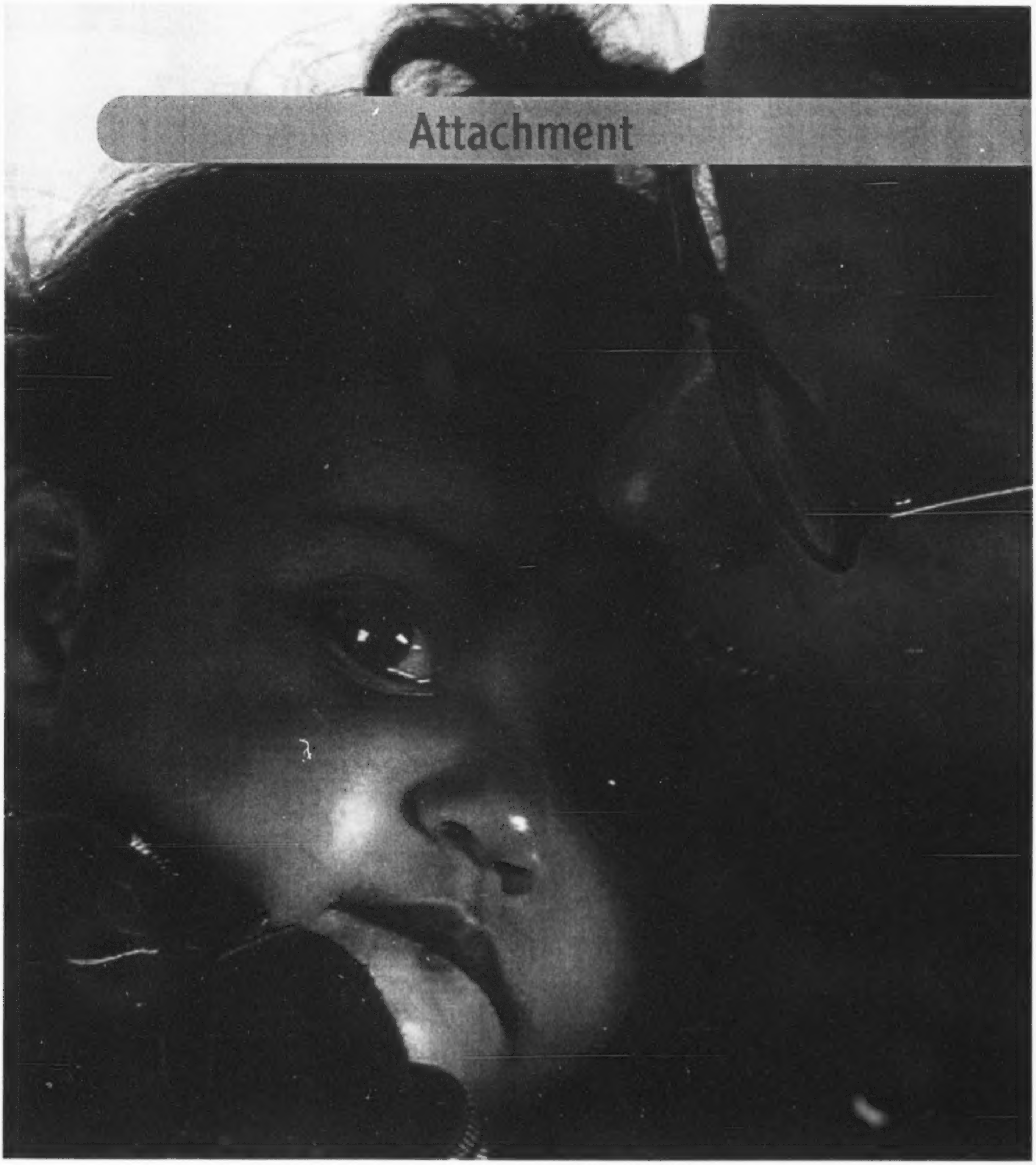
Attachment

Attachment



My baby is really turning into his own person. He can be quite a little character! I've been responding to my baby the best way I know but he seems very clingy. Is that normal?

Building love, trust, and confidence

You have been building a bond with your baby by consistently responding to his needs with love and care. You come when he cries. You feed him when he's hungry. You comfort him when he's cold, tired or lonely. You pay attention to his cues and try to figure out what he needs. Responding in this way won't spoil your baby.

While you've been learning about your baby over the past months, he's been learning that he can count on you to be there when he needs you. This helps your baby to build love, trust, and confidence. It helps him feel secure.

Your baby will show his growing love, trust, and confidence by:

- **Wanting to be close to you.**
  At this age, you may find that your baby wants to be close to you all the time.
- **Wanting you to hold and cuddle him.**
  Your baby needs as much love and cuddling as ever—maybe even more.
- **Responding to you.**
  Smiling when you smile, laughing and squealing when you play.
- **Looking to you for comfort.**
  You are the centre of your baby's world! He's beginning to understand that he needs you and can count on you.

Attachment influences the way your baby's brain develops. It affects how your baby will think, learn, feel, and behave for his whole life. As your baby grows, his attachment to you will mean that:

- He'll be more likely to come to you with his problems.
- He'll be better at controlling his feelings. For example, he'll be less likely to shout or hit when angry.
- He'll be more confident.

Babies understand feelings long before they understand words. A gentle voice and gentle handling will let your baby feel your love. Babies are very sensitive to angry voices and rough handling—like pushing, grabbing, or pulling. This can make it more difficult for your baby to form a bond with you.

Your baby can't be too attached to you. A strong attachment gives him the confidence he needs to explore his world. It enables him to develop independence. A strong attachment allows him to let go because he knows you'll always be there when he needs you.

Added info...

Different cultures and ethnic groups have special activities and rituals that offer opportunities for being close and building bonds between parent and baby. These could be things like hair care, massage, songs or stories.

Think about the things that made you feel close to your own parents and culture when you were a child. Make these activities a special part of your baby's life.

Added info...

It's never too late to begin building bonds between you and your baby.

You may be adopting a baby or may have been separated from your baby for a while and wonder if you've missed your chance for attachment. You have not.

Responding to your baby's needs will build love and trust between you at any age.

Talk to your health care provider if you are concerned about your baby's attachment.

Temperament

By the time your baby is 6 months old, you'll have a pretty good idea about what she's like—that is, the kind of temperament she has. You'll know how active she is and how she reacts to new people and events. You'll know whether she usually wakes up smiling or crying.

Parents have temperaments and personalities, too. Are you quiet or talkative? Are you easy-going? Or do you get upset when little things go wrong? Are you out-going or do you make friends slowly?

The kind of person you are can make it easier or more difficult for you to appreciate your baby's special qualities. For example, if you and your baby have the same kind of temperament, you may find it easy to understand her behaviour. If your temperament is different from your baby's, you may have to make more of an effort to understand and appreciate her.

CAUTION!

Don't give your baby a nickname you wouldn't want to have yourself, even if you're only joking.

An unkind nickname like "Piggy " or "Dummy" or "Chubby" might seem funny or cute when your baby is small. But nicknames have a way of sticking and it won't be funny when she's older.

It's also not helpful to give your baby a label—like telling her or others that she's "shy," "difficult," "picky," or "bad." These kinds of labels may make your baby feel bad about herself as she gets older.

You can't change your baby's temperament. But how you respond to her will make a difference in how she sees herself and the kind of person she becomes. If you see your child's qualities as special, she'll see herself that way, too.

Different temperaments

Your baby's temperament is something he was born with. It doesn't change. It's not the same as a mood that can change from day to day.

His temperament affects how your baby reacts to the world and the people around him.

On the next pages, you'll find descriptions of 3 kinds of temperaments.

Most likely, your baby won't be exactly like any one of these three kinds of temperaments. But he may be most like one and the ideas on how to help him be his best may be helpful to you.

Temperament 1

If your baby...

- Is happy to sit or play quietly—is not very active
- Eats and sleeps at the same times every day
- Gets used to new people, places and activities easily
- Doesn't get upset often
- Whimpers quietly if wet or hungry
- Doesn't make a fuss when upset
- Doesn't cry often
- Is usually happy and smiles a lot

You can help him be his best by...

- Spending time with him. He needs to be played with and talked to even if he seems happy on his own.
- Paying close attention to his cues. He may be so quiet that you need to look closely to see what he needs.
- Supporting his routines. Have regular mealtimes and bedtimes.
- Letting him enjoy other people. Find friends and relatives to spend time with him.

Temperament 2

If your baby...

- Is active—can sometimes sit quietly, but likes to move, too
- Usually—but not always—wants to eat and sleep at the same times every day
- Takes a while to get used to new people, places, and activities
- Clings to familiar people
- Gets upset if there's too much activity or excitement
- Cries when upset
- Takes some time to warm up before smiling

You can help him be his best by...

- Giving him chances to play quietly and to be active.
- Encouraging his routines. Have regular mealtimes and bedtimes.
- Being patient. Give him time to get used to new things and new people. Don't rush or push him. Stay close so he'll know he's safe.
- Introducing new people slowly. Don't leave him with someone he doesn't know until he's had a chance to get used to them.
- Watching for his cues that he's getting upset or over-excited. Move him to a quieter place.
- Responding when he cries.
- Smiling at him. Give him lots of reasons to smile back.

Temperament 3

If your baby...

- Is very active—twists and squirms. It's hard to keep him still long enough to change a diaper.
- Has a hard time settling into an eating and sleeping routine—wakes up often at night
- Has a very hard time getting used to new people, places, or activities. Does not like moving from one activity to another.
- Gets upset when he doesn't like something and lets everyone know it. Has a hard time calming down when upset.
- Cries loudly when wet, hungry or angry
- Is strong-willed
- Demands attention—will keep pushing to get what he wants

You can help him be his best by...

- Childproofing your home early. Your baby will probably move faster and sooner than others. You need to be ready to keep him safe.
- Developing routines. Have regular mealtimes and bedtimes. Gently help your baby get used to them. Find a quiet bedtime routine that helps him calm down.
- Allowing enough time for him to get used to new people and places. Let him know what's coming next. Give him time to get used to the idea.
- Accepting that your child will react strongly. Respond quickly and help him calm down. Stay calm. By staying calm you're teaching him to be calm.
- Giving your child the love, support, and attention he needs. Be consistent.

Your baby wants you to know...

You are the centre of my world. I need to know that you're near. I worry when I can't see you.

I need you to hold me and respond to me. I need to know you love me just the way I am.

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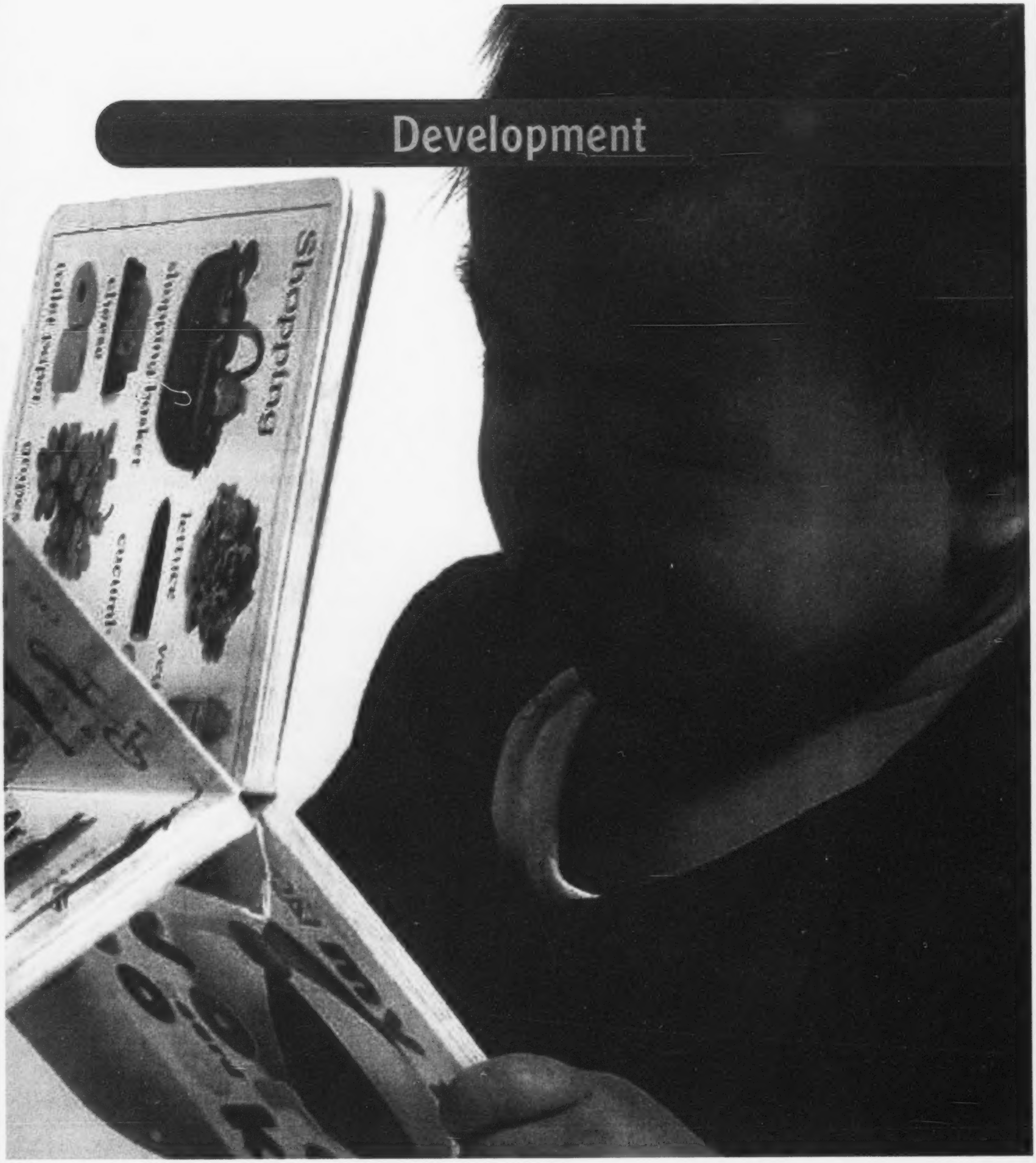
Added info...

If your baby is premature or has special needs, she may develop skills at different times than other babies.

Talk to your health care provider about what to expect with your baby.

Development


Shopping
shopping basket
cheese
toilet paper
lettuce
cucumber
grapes

My baby has grown so much! She's learning to do new things every day. What can I do to help her?

Developing skills

This is an exciting time! Your baby is growing stronger and is able to do more things day by day.

She's getting better at using her hands. She'll be learning to feed herself with her fingers and to hold a spoon. She'll be learning to hold and drink from a cup.

She's becoming more mobile. Over the next few months, she'll learn to crawl, to stand, and maybe to take her first steps.

She's becoming more and more responsive to voices and faces. She'll say her first words.

She's starting to learn about her world and the people in it.

Children develop new skills by building on what they've already learned. For example, first they learn to lift their head, then to push up on their arms, then to get up on all fours, then to crawl. Encourage your baby as she develops each new skill, but don't rush her. Give her time to get comfortable with each skill before she moves on to the next.

Every baby grows and develops new skills in her own way and in her own time. Children are very different in how fast they grow and at what age they develop new skills.

On the next few pages you'll find new skills your baby will be developing over the next few months. Don't be concerned if your baby can't do every one of these things at these times. Babies develop skills at slightly different times.

If you are concerned, see page 20 "When to wonder about your baby's development."

Praise your baby's efforts as she tries out new skills. Your baby depends on your love and support as she grows and develops.

New skills to watch for **between 6 and 9 months**

your baby will learn to...

Get up on hands and knees.

Eat with fingers.

Sit up alone.

Stand with support.

Move around. Some babies crawl, some scoot on their tummy, some shuffle along on their bum.

Pass things from hand to hand.

Pick up small things with thumb and first finger.

Throw, wave, drop, and bang toys together.

Babble. This can almost sound like talking.

New skills to watch for **between 6 and 9 months**

your baby will learn to...

Shake his head "no." Wave bye-bye.

Say "dada" and "mama." Recognize the names of other family members.

Copy what you do—clap his hands, wave, and copy sounds you make.

Look for things when you show them to him, then let him watch you hide them—for example, under a cushion. If you hide something behind your back, your baby might crawl around you to find it.

Respond to other people's feelings. He'll know by the sound of your voice when you're happy, sad or angry. He'll smile when you're happy. He'll frown or look worried when you sound angry.

Recognize and be happy to see people he knows. He'll show you how much he loves you by smiling or laughing when he sees you.

Turn and look when you call his name.

Look to see where things go when they fall out of sight.

New skills to watch for **between 10 and 12 months**

your baby will learn to...

Hold a spoon and a cup. Try to feed himself. Drink from a cup with help. Hold, bite and chew on soft foods

Take a few steps holding your hand or holding onto furniture or a push toy. Babies learn to walk best in soft shoes or bare feet.

Stand alone and bend over.

Clap hands.

Take things out of a box or container.

New skills to watch for **between 10 and 12 months**

your baby will learn to...

Say one or two words. These might be hard to understand at first.

Begin to respond to simple requests—like, "More bananas?" or "Give it to Daddy."

Start to recognize the word "no." Your baby might know what the word means, but is still too young to stop what he's doing when he hears "no."

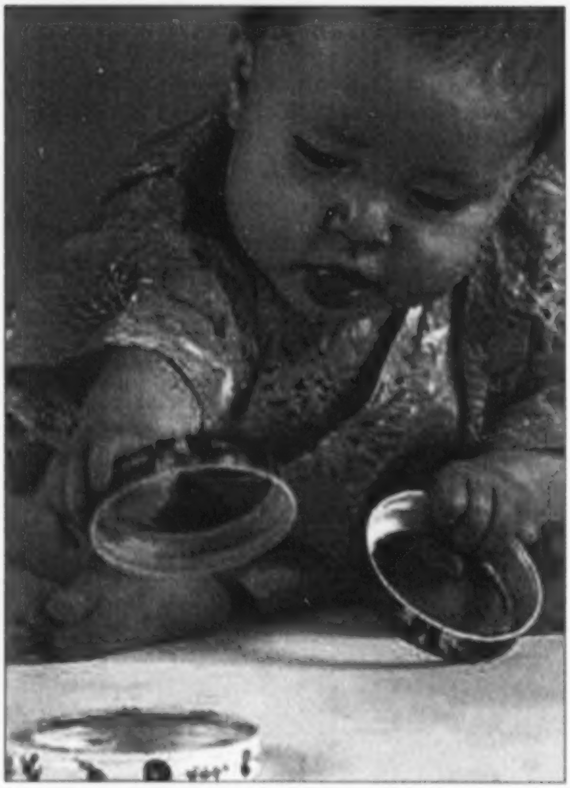
Use actions to let you know what he wants. He might hold out his arms to be picked up. Or might make the same sound or do the same thing over and over until you notice him.

Use exclamations, such as "Uh-oh!"

Help your baby develop

To help your baby develop her muscles:

- **Show her how to do things.**
  Show her how to drop toys into large pots or other containers. Show her how to dump them out and put them back in. Let her copy what you do.
- **Encourage her to move.**
  When she's on the floor, put toys just out of reach and encourage her to move to get them. Put cushions on the floor for her to climb over. Lay on the floor and let her climb over you! When she starts learning to walk, give her an upside down laundry basket to push.
- **Give her lots of chances to use her fingers and hands.**
  Once your baby is eating solid foods, put small pieces of soft food in a bowl and let her pick out pieces to eat. Let her hold a spoon at mealtime. Give her toys that squirt water or make noise when squeezed.



Double Check

As your baby starts to move around and to do more things, safety becomes an even bigger concern.

- You'll find information on babyproofing your home on **pages 111 to 115.**
- You'll find information on eating safely on **page 70.**

Added info...

Babies like to do things over and over. For example, your baby might drop her spoon onto the floor over and over. If you build a tower of blocks, she'll knock it down over and over.

Be patient and enjoy the action! This is how babies learn that they can make things happen!

To help your baby develop hearing and speech:

- **Talk to your baby.**
  Describe everything you do and see. Use real words, not baby talk. Describe what she's hearing, seeing, feeling, and doing. "Now I'm washing your arm." "Daddy's kissing your toes." "Mommy's holding the book." "Look at the red flower." "See the black kitty?" "Does your blanket feel soft?" Repeat the sounds your baby makes.
- **Sing to your baby. Recite rhymes and poems. Read to her.**
  Babies like to hear the same songs and stories over and over.

Added info...

Don't rush your baby. Give her the time and support she needs to grow and learn.

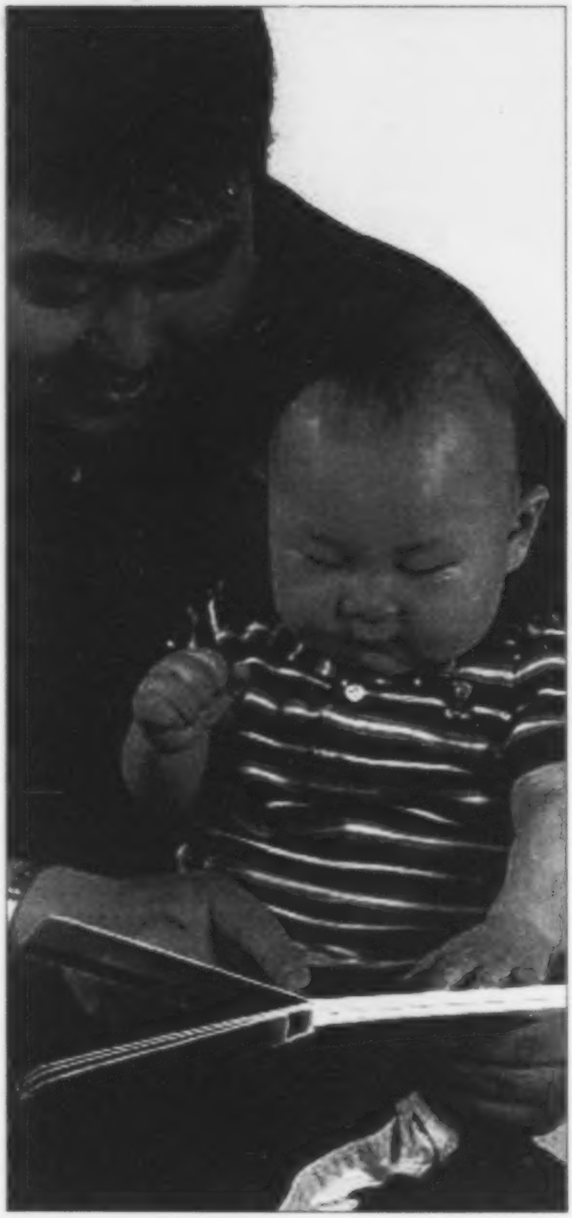
Development happens naturally as you play with and take care of your baby and other children. Including your other children when you play with your baby can be fun for everyone.

To help your baby develop social skills:

- **Show your baby how to do things.**
  Clap hands, blow kisses, and wave bye-bye.
- **Respect her feelings.**
  Your baby is starting to notice that people are different. She'll be glad to see some people. She'll start to be shy with some people. Let her take her time. She'll decide for herself who she likes.
- **Interact with your baby.**
  Sit face-to-face when you play so she can see you smile and make faces. Copy her facial expressions and give her time to respond to yours.
- **Praise and encourage your baby.**
  Smile when you praise your baby. Say things like, "Good job getting your red ball!" and "Wow! You pulled yourself up!" Let her know that you notice and care about what she does.

You help your baby develop every day

Many of the things you do every day will help your baby develop. You don't always need to set aside special time to do special activities to help your baby develop. Often, a single activity will help your baby in many different ways.



When you hold your baby on your lap and read to him:

- You're helping him develop hearing and speaking skills.
- When you name the things he sees in the pictures, you're helping him learn that words have meanings.
- When you let him hold the book and turn the pages, you're helping him learn to use the small muscles in his hands.
- You're helping him develop social skills by strengthening your attachment to one another.
- You're teaching him to love learning by showing him that reading is fun!

When you play rhyming, clapping, and singing games—like patty-cake, peek-a-boo, or ring-around-a-rosie:

- You're helping your baby to learn new words by hearing them over and over.
- You're helping him learn about rhythm and rhyme.
- You're helping him develop muscle skills by doing simple hand motions.
- You're helping him develop social skills by learning that playing with others is fun!

Helping your baby learn new and exciting skills can be fun for you both!

Added info...

Clapping, singing, rhyming, and moving games are so important to babies' development that every culture has some of its own!

You can share your culture with your baby by playing the games and singing the songs you knew as a child.

When to wonder about your baby's development

Between 6 and 12 months, most babies have developed a basic set of skills.

Talk to a health care provider if by 12 months your baby:

- Cannot sit by herself
- Has not started crawling or scooting around the floor
- Cannot stand when you hold her up
- Isn't usually interested in playing peek-a-boo
- Doesn't usually smile back when you smile
- Doesn't usually laugh back when you laugh
- Doesn't babble. Doesn't say simple words like "mama" or "dada."
- Doesn't look for toys that you hide while she watches
- Doesn't point to objects or pictures when you say their name

Trust your instincts. If you are concerned about your baby's development at any time, you can contact Early Intervention Nova Scotia (contact information, page 123), your local Public Health Services office (contact information, page123), or your health care provider.

Double Check

Remember: You know your baby best! You'll find information on looking for help from health services in your community in the *"Welcome"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

You have a right to information about your baby's health and development. There are no stupid questions!

Added info...

In this book we use the term "health care provider" to mean any of a number of professionals who can help parents and families. These include:

- Dentists
- Dental hygienists
- Doctors
- Midwives
- Nurses
- Nurse Practitioners
- Pharmacists
- Psychologists
- Public health nurses
- Public health nutritionists
- Registered dietitians
- Registered social workers

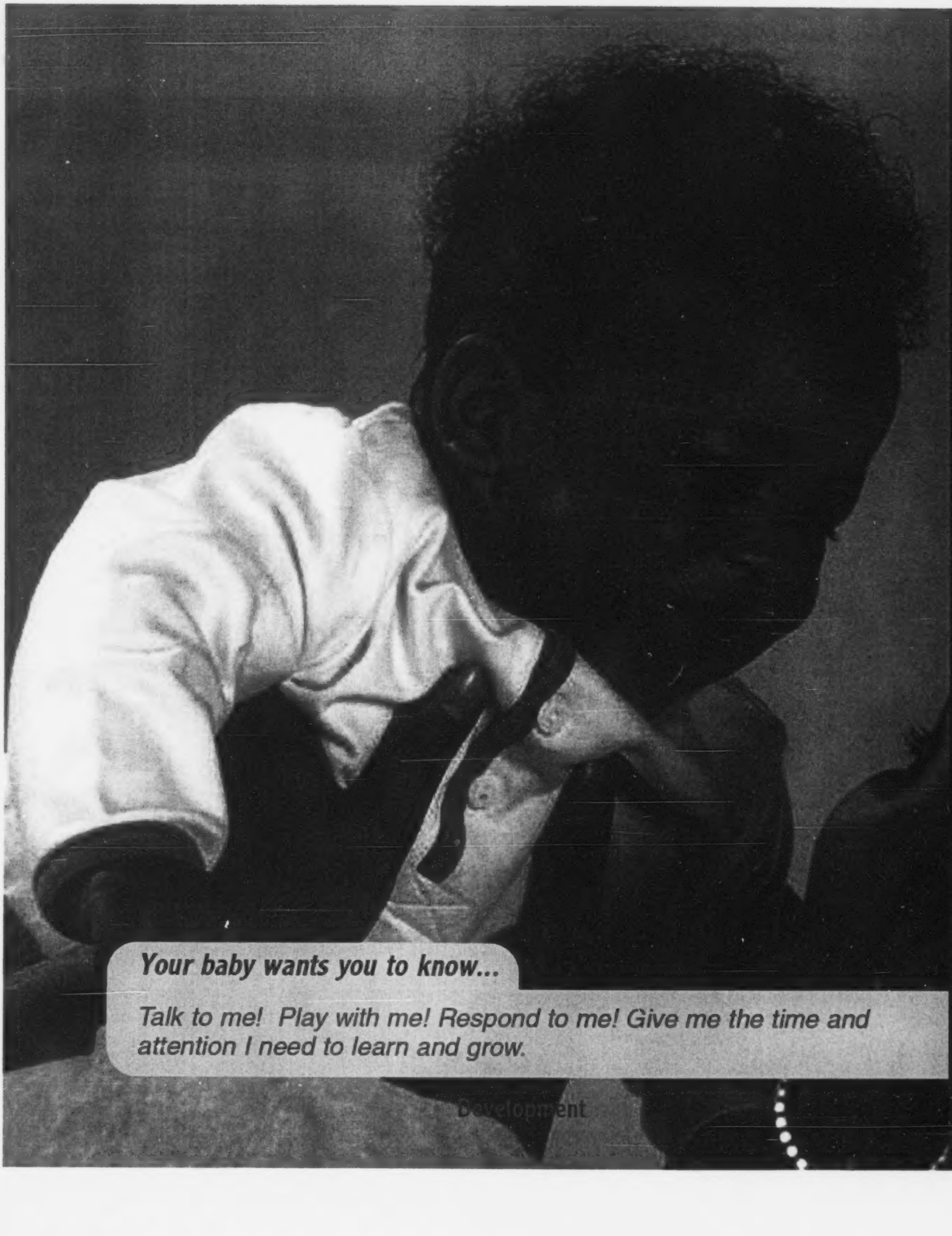
It's too soon for toilet training

Most children aren't ready to learn to use the toilet until after age 2.

Your baby won't have the ability to hold back pee or poop until after he's 2.

Don't try to force your child to use the toilet before he's ready. If you try to teach your baby to do something that he's not old enough to learn, you'll both get frustrated and upset.

Be patient. Wait until after your baby's second birthday. By then, your toddler will be more ready to learn. Teaching him to use the toilet on his own will be easier for both of you.



It's too soon for toilet training

Your baby wants you to know...

Talk to me! Play with me! Respond to me! Give me the time and attention I need to learn and grow.

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Play

How does playing help my baby? Is it still important for me to play with her? What can I do that will be fun for us both?

Play is important

Play is how babies learn about themselves, their world, and the people in it.

Play builds babies' brains in many ways:

- **Play gives babies the chance to learn what their bodies can do:** hold, let go, reach, clap, wave, sit, move, crawl, and make sounds.
- **Play gives babies the chance to explore and learn about cause and effect.** What happens if I drop this rattle? Where does the toy go when it's under the blanket? If I climb over the pillow, will I get to Mommy? Can I catch the ball rolling on the floor?

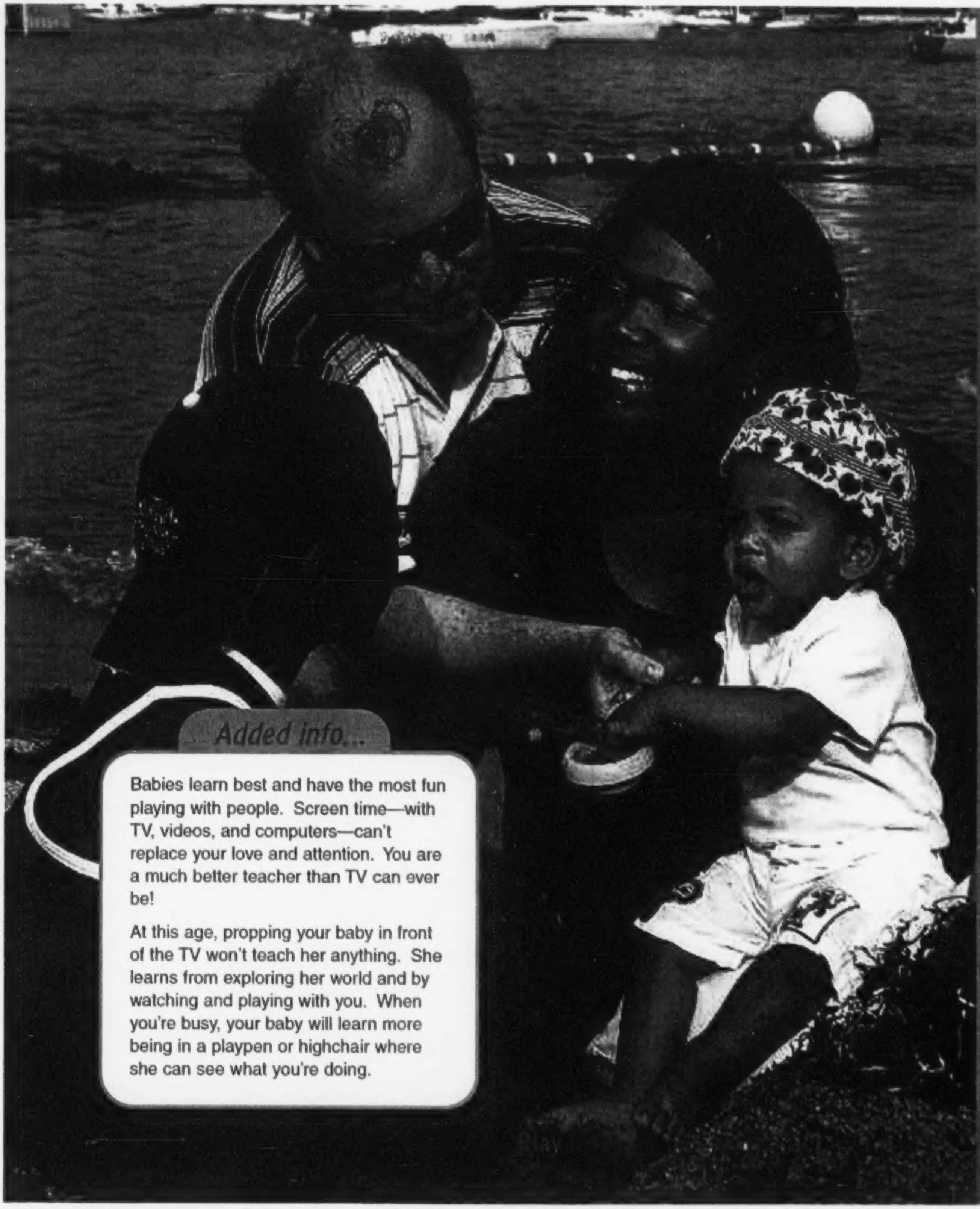
- **Play gives babies the chance to have fun with people who love them.** They learn new words, copy your smiles and actions, and begin to learn how to get along with others.

Play is good for the whole family! Healthy activities like going for walks together, visiting a park, or dancing around the room together are fun for everyone.

Play with your baby. Follow her cues.

Watch your baby's expression and listen to the sounds she makes. They will tell you how your baby is feeling while you play. Put these feelings into words for her—"You love singing!", "You're a happy girl when we play together!"

The best time to play is when she's quiet and alert. When she's tired of playing, she'll show you by turning away or losing interest.



Added info...

Babies learn best and have the most fun playing with people. Screen time—with TV, videos, and computers—can't replace your love and attention. You are a much better teacher than TV can ever be!

At this age, propping your baby in front of the TV won't teach her anything. She learns from exploring her world and by watching and playing with you. When you're busy, your baby will learn more being in a playpen or highchair where she can see what you're doing.

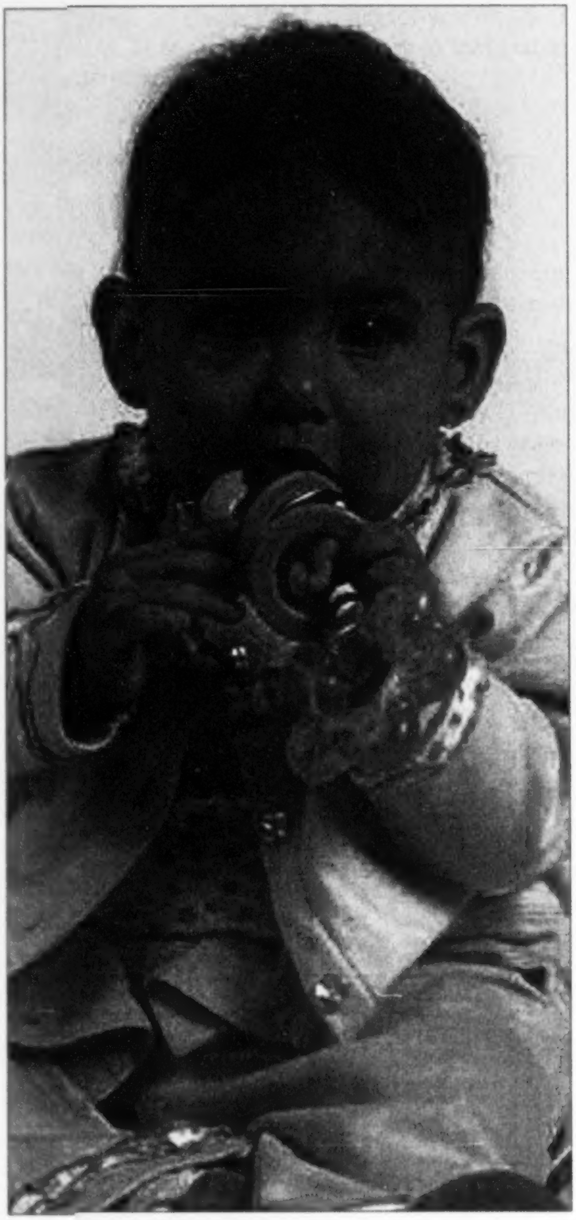
Games and activities

Games and activities are fun for you and your baby. They also help your baby to learn. Babies learn by:

- Seeing something they want to do
- Trying to do it
- Doing it over and over

When you play with your baby, be sure he's looking at you when you start. Show him what to do. Give him a chance to copy you. Praise him for trying. Praise him when he succeeds.

Learning takes time. Don't rush your baby. Play with him when he's alert and interested. Stop when he loses interest or turns away. Let your baby set the pace. If you try an activity and your baby isn't interested, wait a few days or weeks and try it again.



Added info...

You can encourage your baby by being very clear about what you're praising. Say things like:
"You did it!"
"You put the ball in the basket!"
"You're trying hard to climb the cushion!"

When you praise your baby, smile and clap. Let him see and hear how proud you are.

Babies like to play in different ways at different times.

- Sometimes they'll like active play—rolling, creeping, crawling and climbing, crawling through tunnels, and hiding under tables.
- Sometimes they enjoy quiet play—like songs and stories, being read to, or playing clapping games and peek-a-boo.
- Sometimes they like to play on their own—filling containers and dumping them out, banging toys together.

Try lots of different activities with your baby. Grandparents and elders can be a good source for games, songs, and rhymes from your culture.

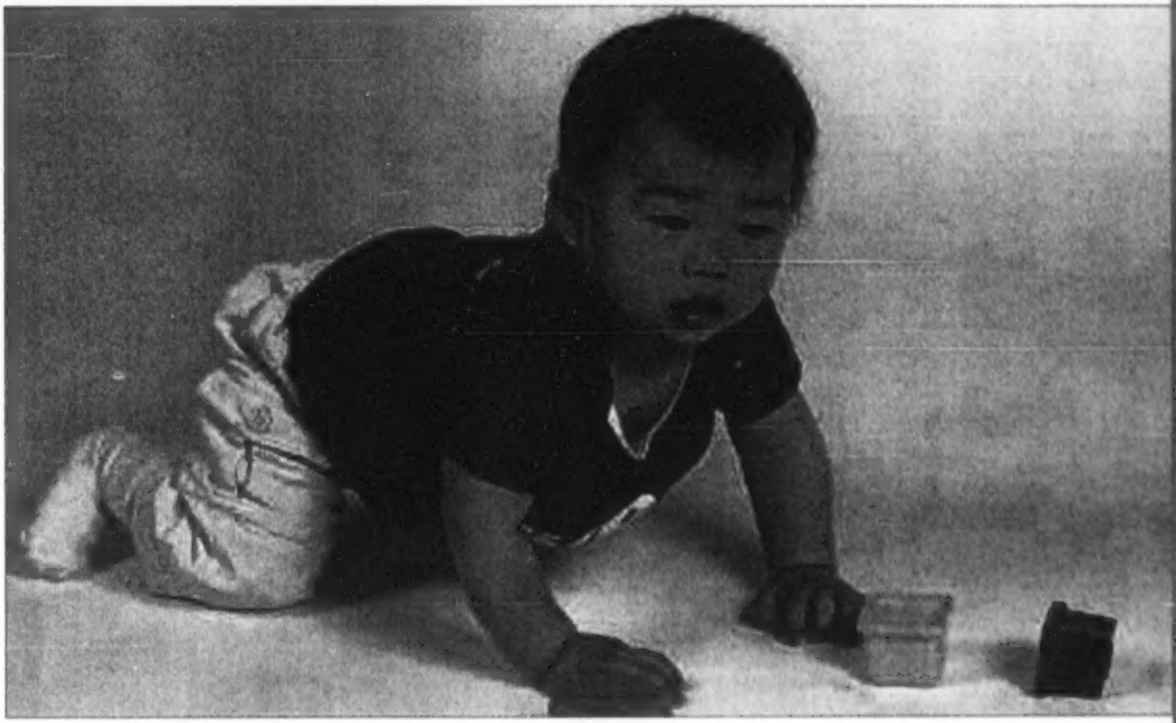
On the next pages you'll find a few games and activities to get you started. Follow your baby's cues. He'll let you know what he likes best.

Added info...

When you're playing with your baby, most of the time you're showing him what to do and he's copying you. It can be great fun for you both to switch this around.

When your baby is playing, let him take the lead and then copy whatever he does.

- If he claps his hands, clap along.
- If he crawls over a cushion, crawl after him.
- If he puts lids in a container, put them in too.
- If he bangs lids together, bang with him.



Games for you and your baby—6 to 9 months

Creeping crawlers

To help your baby strengthen her arms and legs:

1. Lay your baby on her tummy on the floor. Move in front of her so she can see you. Crawl. See if she tries to copy you.
2. Gently support her in a crawling position on all fours. Let go. Trying to stay up on all fours will help her muscles get strong enough for crawling.
3. When she can stay up on her own, put a toy she likes on the floor in front of her. This will encourage her to crawl toward it.

Climbing and crawling

To help your baby practice crawling:

1. When your baby has started crawling, put some cushions and folded blankets on the floor.
2. Encourage your baby to crawl over and around them. Your baby may enjoy you crawling beside or behind her.

Lots of lids

To help your baby learn to use her hands:

1. Collect lids from frozen juice containers and metal lids from jars. Use the kind of lids that pull off with no sharp edges, NOT the kind that open with a can opener.
2. Find a plastic or metal container with no sharp edges, like a margarine container.
3. Show your baby how to put the juice lids in the container. Let her watch you do it. See if she tries to copy you. Be patient. There's no rush. If your baby would rather bang the lids together or play with them in another way, that's fine. Just wait a few days and try again.
4. Next, show your baby how to spill all the lids out, and start over.

Describe what you're doing while playing this game. Talk about how you're putting the lids into the container. Describe the noise they make, or how they spin or roll around.

Added info...

Your baby will enjoy playing with these lids for a long time, so keep collecting lids.

For example, when your baby gets a bit older, you can put simple, brightly-coloured stickers on the lids. You can use them to teach him the names of the colours, animals, or shapes on the stickers.

You can put the same stickers on two or more lids and use these to help her learn about matching.

Row, row, row your boat

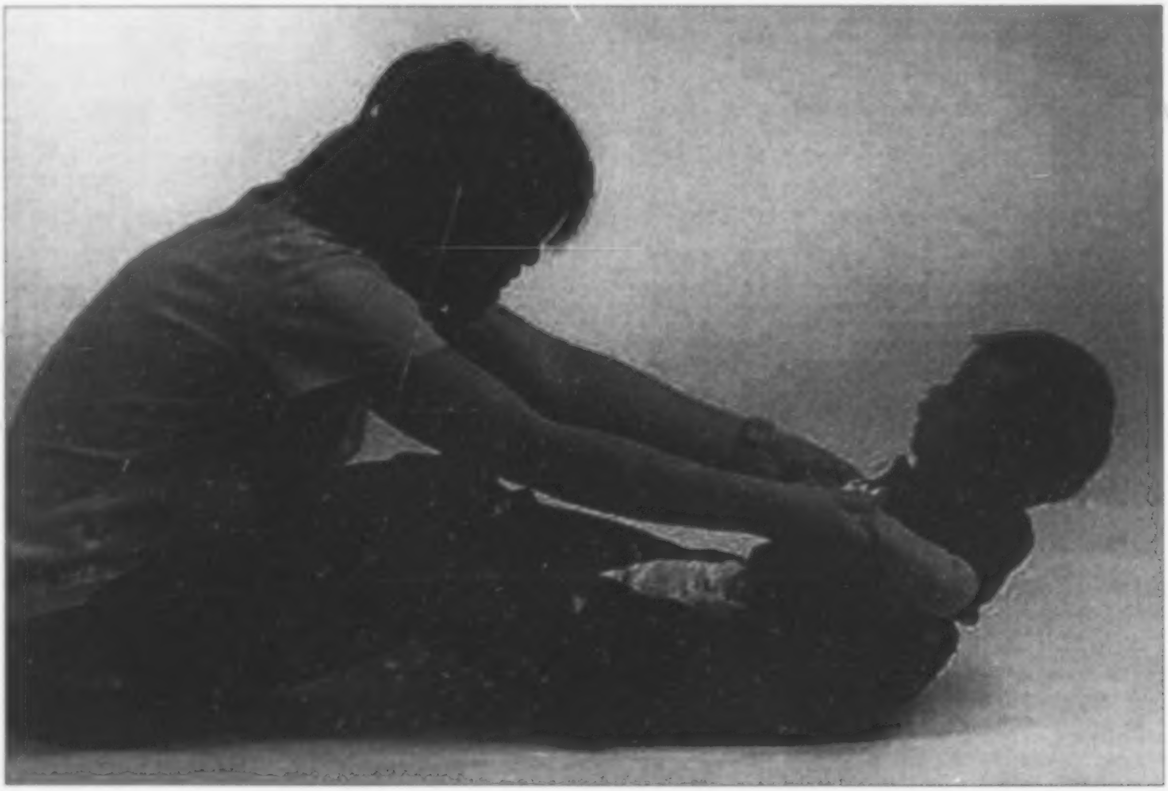
To help your baby strengthen her body:

1. Sit on the floor with your legs long and your knees apart.
2. Sit your baby between your legs, facing you, so that her hands are near your knees.
3. Hold your baby's hands or shoulders. Gently rock back and forth while you sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or another familiar song.
4. When you get to the word DREAM, reach her hands up high.

Added info...

Just in case you haven't heard this song in a while...

Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream,
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a DREAM!



Games for you and your baby—10 to 12 months

Cardboard tunnels

To help build your baby's muscles; to help him learn about ideas like under, through, in, and out:

1. Find a large box—bigger is better. Check to be sure there are no staples or packing materials in the box. The box should be at least big enough for your baby to crawl through.
2. Open the flaps on the ends of the box. Tape them to form a tunnel.
3. To keep the box from falling over, prop it with chairs on each side.
4. Show your baby how to crawl through the tunnel. Show him how to roll balls or trucks through.
5. While your baby is playing, describe what he's doing. For example, "You're crawling fast!", "You rolled the ball through the tunnel." This will help him learn new words and ideas.

If you don't have a box, you can also make a tunnel by throwing a sheet over a table or over two chairs placed back to back.

Read to me

To help your baby learn to like books; to help him learn to connect words with pictures; to make reading fun for parents and baby:

1. Collect children's books from friends, yard sales, or the library. Babies like plastic coated board books with simple, brightly coloured pictures.

2. Hold your baby on your lap. Let him turn the pages if he wants to.

3. Point at the pictures and talk about them. For example: "That's a big green bird. Do you like the bird?", "I see a bear sitting in a tree. Can you point to the bear?"

4. Make up little stories for pictures your baby seems to like. For example: "Look, here's an orange cat, just like Grandpa has. The cat says meow. Can you say meow? Meow, meow."

5. Go at your baby's pace. The point is to give your baby a chance to have fun with books. You don't have to read the entire story or look at every page. Babies like to "read" the same books over and over.

Take books with you when you go out—on the bus, in the car, and to the doctor's office. Find time every day to share books with your baby.

Added info...

Check out your local library or bookmobile for books and programs for babies. The librarian can suggest good books for your baby's age.

See page 126 for contact information.

If you're happy and you know it

To help your baby learn the names of body parts; learn to move the right part of his body when he hears its name; and to give him a chance to have fun:

1. Sing the song and do the actions. Help your baby do the actions until he learns to do them on his own.

   If you're happy and you know it,
   CLAP YOUR HANDS

   If you're happy and you know it,
   CLAP YOUR HANDS

   If you're happy and you know it, and you really want to show it
   If you're happy and you know it,
   CLAP YOUR HANDS!

2. Repeat, using different body parts in the song. For example:

   If you're happy and you know it,
   TOUCH YOUR NOSE

   If you're happy and you know it,
   KICK YOUR FEET

   If you're happy and you know it,
   TOUCH YOUR EARS

   If you're happy and you know it,
   PAT YOUR HEAD

   If you're happy and you know it,
   RUB YOUR ELBOW

Added info...

Think about the songs you loved as a child.
Enjoy them again with your baby!

Clapping

To help your baby learn to use his hands:

1. Clap your hands where your baby can see you.
2. Encourage him to clap on his own.

   You can encourage clapping by clapping and cheering when your baby does something new or exciting.

Building up and knocking down

To help your baby build muscles; develop coordination; and learn about cause and effect:

You can use tissue boxes, plastic containers, or wooden or soft blocks for this.

1. Sit on the floor with your baby.
2. Build a tower using 2 or 3 blocks.
3. Knock it over.
4. Let your baby try.

Rolling ball

To help your baby play with others:

1. Sit on the floor facing your baby.
2. Roll a ball toward him.
3. Ask him to roll it back to you.
4. When he does, roll it toward him again, this time a little faster.

This can be fun for older brothers or sisters to play with the baby.

Added info...

Babies learn to talk by listening to the people around them.

- When you play with your baby, talk, talk, talk about what you and your baby are doing.
- "Talk" to your baby by repeating the sounds he makes like "da, da, da," or "ma, ma, ma."
- Talk back and forth with your baby on a play phone.
- As you do everyday jobs—like cooking, cleaning, and shopping—describe them to your baby as you do them.

Toys

You are still your baby's best "toy."

- You can talk, sing, and read to her.
- You can help her to sit, crawl, stand, and move around.
- You can show her how to clap and wave, how to put things in boxes and take them out, and how to crawl through tunnels.
- You can show her the world by telling her what she sees when you take her for walks or grocery shopping.

What other toy can do all that?

At this age, your baby is curious about everything. She wants to see, feel, hear, and taste everything. She wants to do things and make things happen. She needs toys that can help her explore.

Toys don't need to be expensive, or even store bought. Lots of things in your home make fine toys for babies.

Added info...

It can be a good idea to put some toys away for a few days once in a while. Then, when you bring them back, they'll seem new to your baby.

Many Family Resource Centres (contact information, page 124) have toy libraries where you can borrow toys. This is a good way to give your baby the chance to play with different toys.

Your baby will enjoy:

- **Toys that make noise:**
  Pots and pans to bang, wooden spoons to hit them with, rattles to shake, squeaky toys to squeeze
- **Toys that move:**
  Balls to roll, cars to push
- **Toys to stack and nest:**
  Soft blocks to stack up and knock down, empty plastic containers to stack, measuring cups that fit inside one another
- **Toys to hold and squeeze:**
  Dolls, stuffed animals, soft books
- **Toys to crawl through and climb:**
  Big empty boxes to crawl through, firm cushions to climb over
- **Toys for bath time:**
  Toys that float, containers, funnels, squeeze bottles, cups

CAUTION!

Everything your baby plays with should be safe, clean, and right for her age.

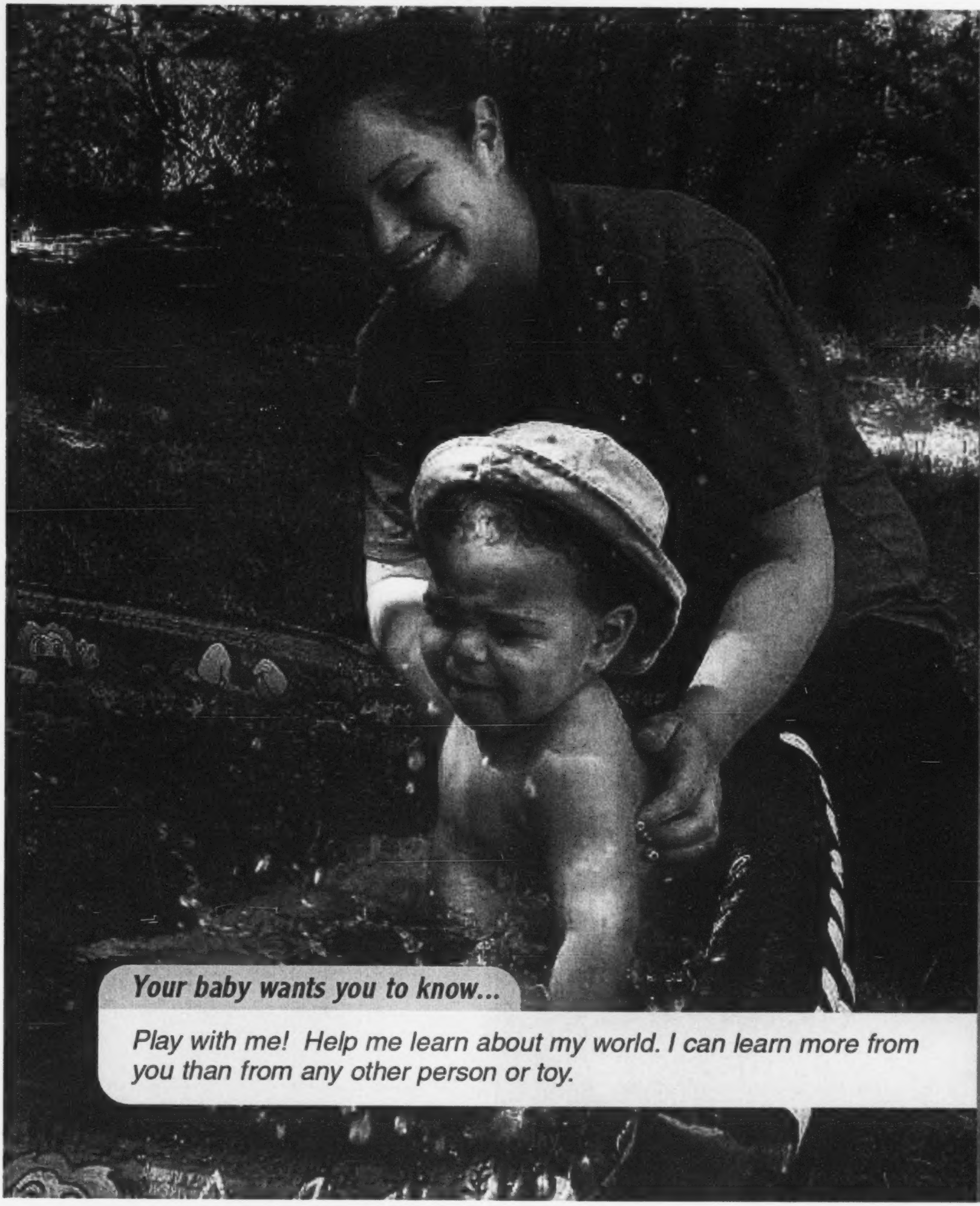
Safe baby toys:

- Have no sharp points or edges.
- Have no small parts that could break or pull off.
- Are too big to swallow or choke on. Anything that can fit through a toilet paper roll is too small for your baby to play with.
- Are not too noisy. If a toy is loud enough that you have to raise your voice above the noise, it's too noisy for your baby.

Check your baby's toys often. Keep them clean. Carefully wash any household items you use as toys. Throw away broken or damaged toys.

If you buy toys second hand or are given toys, check with Consumer Product Safety (contact information, page 126) to be sure the toys haven't been recalled.

See **page 115** for more information about toy safety.



Your baby wants you to know...

Play with me! Help me learn about my world. I can learn more from you than from any other person or toy.

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- Your baby may not want to let you out of his sight..44
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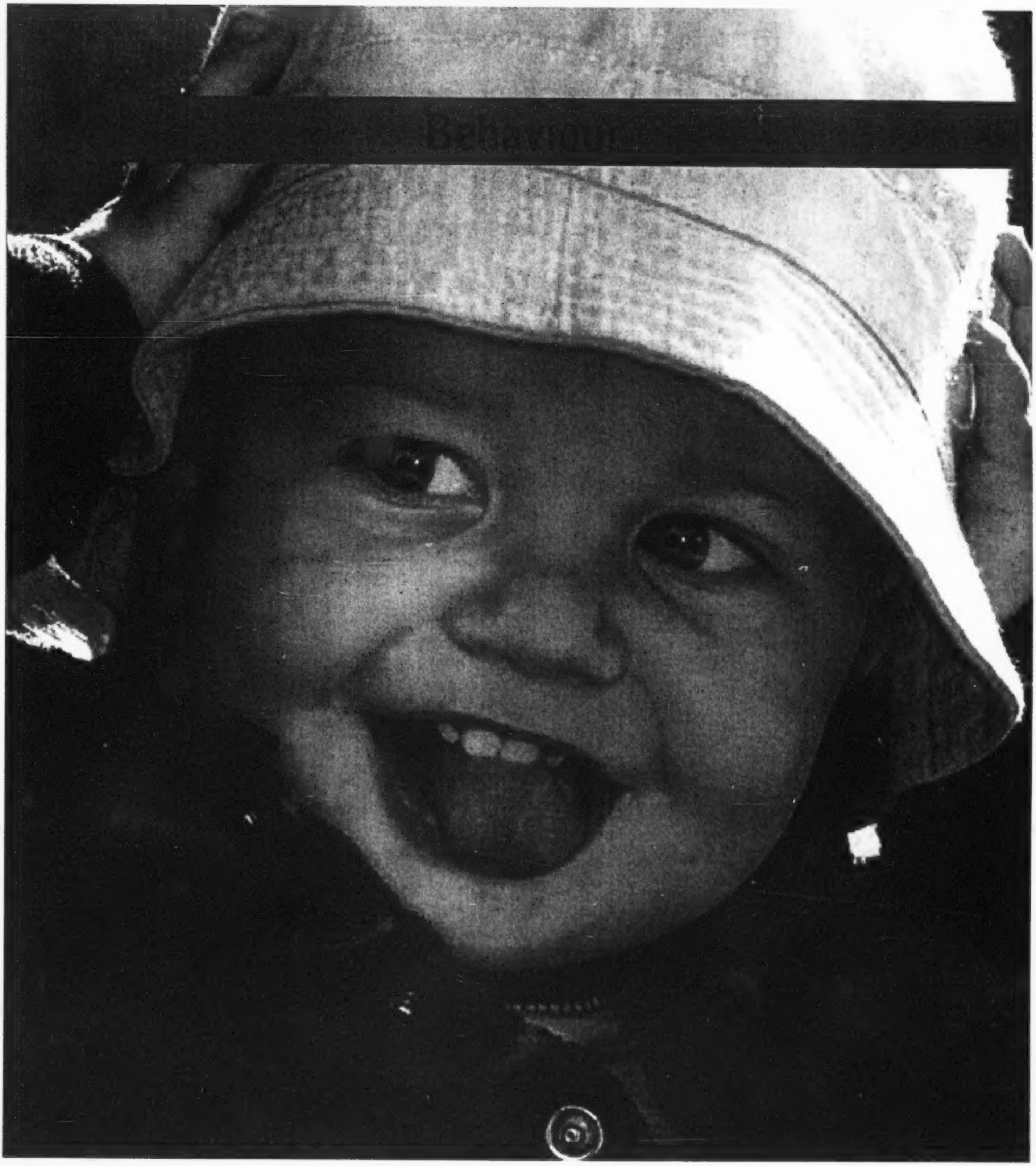
Behaviour



My baby is changing so fast! I thought that as he got older, he'd be more independent, but he seems to be getting more clingy and afraid. And he's starting to get angry when he doesn't get his own way!

Your baby was born with a set of built-in cues to let you know what he needs. For example, he might suck on his fist or fingers when he's hungry. Or close his mouth when he's full.

When you respond to these cues, you are communicating with your baby. You are showing him that he has ways to let you know what he needs. As your baby grows and is able to do more, his cues will change. He'll begin to develop new ways of communicating.

Your baby is still too young to be able to tell you what he needs or to explain how he feels. He can only show you. His behaviour is a way of communicating with you. When you respond to your baby, think: "What is my baby trying to tell me?"

……

Your baby will show he's happy and enjoying himself by:

- Turning, moving, or reaching toward you
- Looking at you with bright, wide eyes
- Clapping, laughing, squealing
- Touching, hugging, kissing
- Waving his arms and kicking his legs
- Pointing at what he wants

Your baby will show you he's unhappy, tired, or upset by:

- Turning, looking, or moving away from you
- Arching his back, pushing away
- Frowning, pouting, sticking out his lower lip
- Fussing, crying, screaming, kicking

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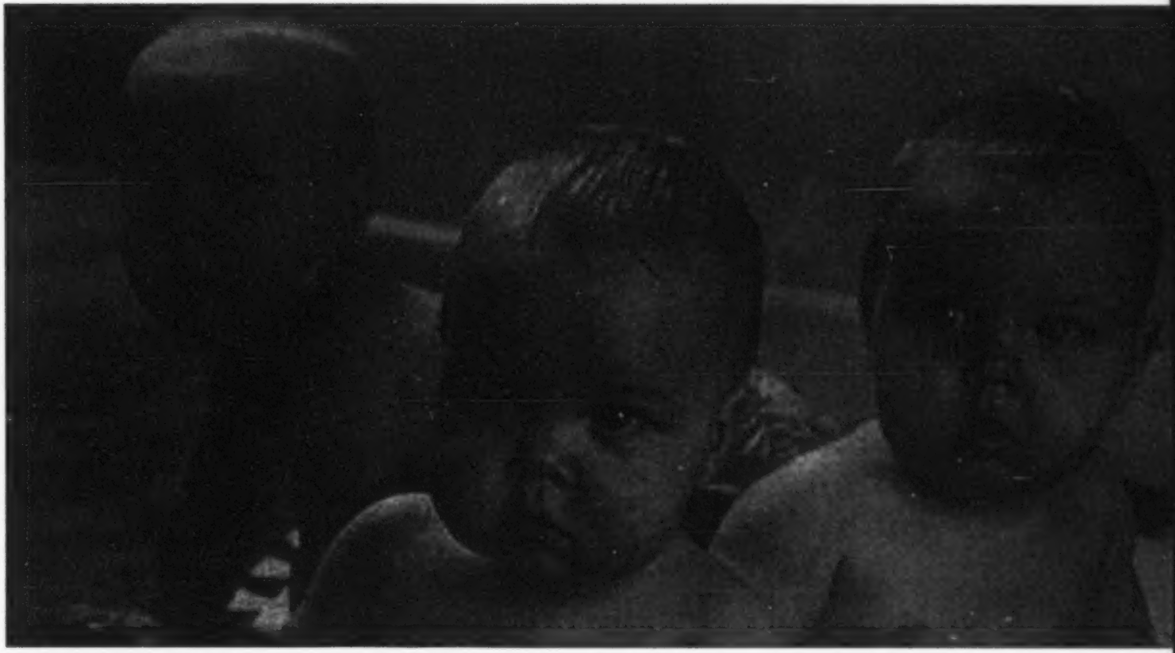


Between 6 and 12 months, many parents notice a few big changes in the way their baby behaves.

- Your baby may not want to let you out of her sight.
- Your baby may become shy and afraid of strangers.
- Your baby may get upset and angry when she can't do something she wants to do.

Parents are sometimes surprised by these changes but they are a natural and important part of your baby's development. Try to see things from your baby's point of view. This can help you understand what she's feeling and why she acts the way she does.

Added info...

It can be tiring and frustrating when your baby cries, clings, and wants you every minute. All parents need some help once in a while.

Try to find someone to help you—like a trusted friend or a relative—who can come on short notice when you need a break. Keep their phone number handy.

Talking to other parents can also be a big help. You'll find information about support for families in the *"Welcome"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

Your baby may not want to let you out of his sight

What your baby is feeling

Your baby knows that you are the most important person in his life. He depends on you for everything. He has formed a strong bond with you. When he can't see you, he doesn't know where you are. He doesn't know if you'll come back. This is very scary for a baby. He'll cry for you when he can't see you.

This is a healthy part of your baby's development. It means that your baby is strongly attached to you. It means that he's learning how much he needs you.

Added info...

Don't feel guilty about leaving your baby to go out once in a while! You need some time to relax—by yourself, with your partner, or with friends.

And your baby needs to learn that when you go away, you **do** come back.

What you can do

This can be very tiring for parents! Be patient. Your baby needs to learn that he can count on you to be there when he needs you. He needs to know that he can trust you to come back when you go away. This can take time.

To help your baby feel safe and loved:

- **Give him as much love and time as you can.**
  Keep him near as much as possible. When he can crawl, let him follow you from room to room. This won't spoil him! When your baby gets the love he needs, he'll feel safe. When he feels safe, he'll be able to become more independent.
- **Help him become attached to other people in his life.**
  Your baby needs other people, even if he doesn't know it. Encourage the other people your baby is comfortable with to give him lots of love and attention.
- **Don't sneak out on your baby.**
  It can be very hard to leave when your baby is screaming for you. It can seem easier to just sneak away when he's not looking and avoid the fuss. Don't do it. This will only teach your baby that he can't trust you. It will make him more worried when he can't see you. He'll cling to you more.

  When you have to leave your baby, be sure he knows the person you're leaving him with. Tell your baby "bye-bye" and that you'll be back soon. He'll still cry, but he'll also slowly learn to trust that you will come back.

Your baby may become shy and afraid of strangers

What your baby is feeling

Your baby knows she loves **you**, but she's not so sure about other people anymore. She's learned that people are different. And there are some people she's more comfortable with than others.

Often what scares your baby isn't the new person. It's what the new person does. For example, would you like a perfect stranger to come up to you on the street and hug you? Your baby doesn't like it much either. Remember that people you know—even relatives—may be strangers to your baby.

What you can do

Respect your baby's feelings.
Give her time to get used to someone new. Let her meet new people while sitting safely on your lap or looking over your shoulder. When your baby is ready, she'll move toward anyone she wants to go to.

Your baby may get upset when he can't do what he wants to do

What your baby is feeling

Your baby is curious about everything. He wants to try new things. It can be very frustrating for him when he can't do what he wants to! And he lets you know he's upset by crying, screaming, and kicking. This doesn't mean that your baby is bad. It's the only way he has to show you how he feels.

What you can do

Be calm.
The best thing you can do when your baby is upset and angry is to stay calm. Your baby is much more likely to quiet down when you are calm and speak to him in a gentle voice. Ask yourself what your child is feeling. Put his feelings into words for him. For example, "You're upset!" or "You feel angry."

These strong feelings are new to your baby. He needs you to be calm and in control when he's feeling out of control. When you get angry, it frightens your baby and makes things worse. No matter how upset your baby gets, never spank, shake, or yell at him.

There are several reasons why your baby might get frustrated:

- **Your baby wants to do something he's not yet able to do.**
  For example, he's learned to sit up by himself, but he hasn't yet learned how to go from sitting to crawling. He gets stuck in one position.

  If this is the case, help your baby learn the skill he needs. Help him practice going from sitting to crawling.

- **You've stopped your baby from doing something that he wants to do.**
  You can't let your baby do things that could hurt him or someone else, no matter how much he wants to. Try distracting your baby with another interesting toy or activity. Try moving him to another place. Sometimes this doesn't work right away and your baby keeps crying. When this happens, tell him you understand how he feels. For example, "I know you want to play with the plastic bag, but it's not safe." Keep comforting him.

CAUTION!

Never shake, spank, or yell at your baby.

Shaking can hurt or kill your baby.

Spanking won't teach your baby to behave. It will hurt and frighten him. It will teach him to be afraid of you. It will teach him that he can't trust you not to hurt him. It will teach him that it's okay for him to hit other people.

Yelling won't teach your baby to behave either. It will frighten him. It will teach him that it's okay for him to yell when he's angry or upset.

For information on handling stress and anger, see the *"All Parents"* section in **Loving Care: Parents and Families**.

Discipline = loving guidance

Discipline is never about punishment. The word "discipline" means teaching.

At this age, discipline is loving guidance that keeps your baby safe and helps her learn. This means being patient, gentle, and consistent as you set limits and help your baby handle her feelings. Your baby may not always be happy about this, but keeping her safe and helping her learn is your job.

There's no point in making rules for babies. They are too young to understand them or to follow them. Babies learn bit by bit, over time. You won't spoil your baby by being patient, gentle, and consistent.

To keep your baby safe and help her learn:

- **Be patient.**
  This is an exciting time. Your baby is learning new things every day—like when she drops a spoon, it makes a noise. Babies learn by doing the same thing over and over. When you understand this, it can be easier to be patient and help her learn.

- **Be consistent.**
  Don't keep changing your mind about what your baby can and can't do. It's very hard for a baby to learn if what you expect of her keeps changing.

  It's also helpful when all your baby's care givers—parents, grandparents, and others—treat your baby in the same way.

  Babies also need consistency in their day-to-day life. They need regular routines.

Added info...

You are your baby's first teacher.

How you treat your baby teaches your baby how to treat you and other people.

If you are calm and patient, even when you feel stressed or upset, your baby will learn to act this way.

If you lose your temper and yell, your baby will learn that this is the way to act when he feels stressed or frustrated.

They need to know what to expect. This kind of consistency helps them feel secure and feeling secure helps them learn.

- **Be gentle.**
  If your baby is reaching for something dangerous, don't slap her hands. Hold them gently and move away. Say, "hot" or "ouch" to let her know about the danger. And be gentle when you speak to your baby. Babies are very sensitive to your tone of voice and angry voices frighten them.

- **Help your baby begin to learn warning words.**
  Don't always say "no." If you say "no" too often, your baby may stop listening to it. Use words like "hot," "yucky," "ouch," "stop," and "wait." Help your baby learn these words and what they mean.

- **Respond to your baby.**
  Your baby wants your attention, love, hugs, and smiles more than anything. Praise her when she learns new things. Praise her for trying. Be specific when you praise. "Yay! You've learned to blow a kiss!", "You did it! You put the block in the bucket!", "Good try!"

- **Babyproof your home.**
  Your baby needs to explore. She needs to see and do new things. Make her world safe so she can't get hurt and so you won't have to say "no" so often.

- **Help your baby get the rest and food she needs.**
  Babies are often unhappy when they are tired or hungry. Be sure your baby is well rested and not hungry when you take her out. Try to stick to her regular times for eating and sleeping.

- **Give your baby other things to do.**
  If your baby is doing something dangerous or wants something she can't have, distract her with another activity.

- **Help your baby learn how to do things.**
  For example, if your baby hits the dog, show her how to pet gently. Show and tell her how to do things. "Chairs are for sitting on.", "Sand is for scooping.", "Grannies are good to hug."

Double Check

Hang on to your temper!

Helping your baby learn and keeping her safe can be frustrating and tiring.

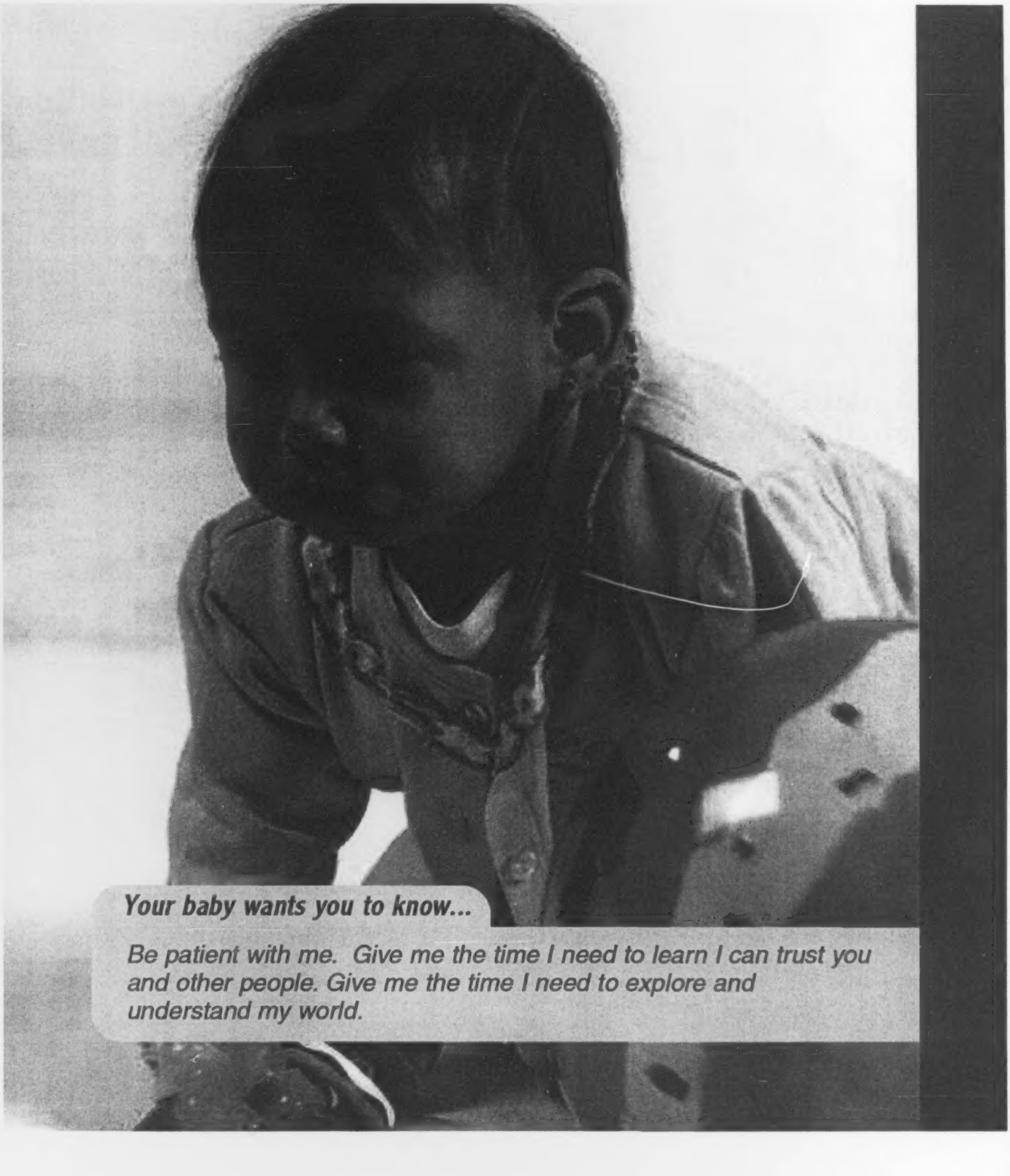
You'll find information on managing stress and anger in the *"All Parents"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

Double Check

You'll find information on babyproofing your home on **page 110.**

Double Check

You'll find information on pet safety in the *"Family Safety"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**



Your baby wants you to know...

Be patient with me. Give me the time I need to learn I can trust you and other people. Give me the time I need to explore and understand my world.

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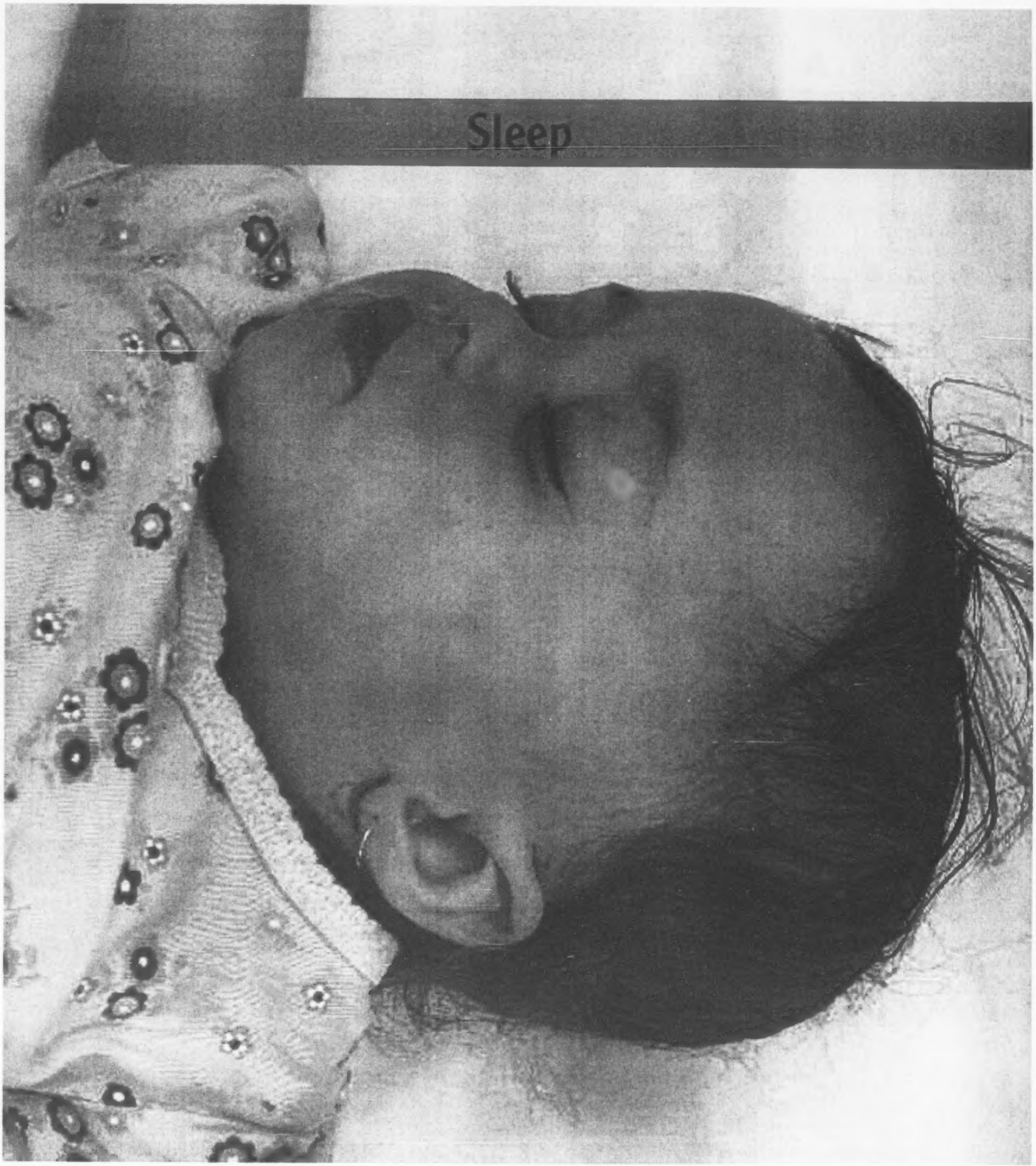
Sleep



Sleep

Helping your baby sleep

There are several things you can do to help your baby settle down to sleep.

- Have a regular daily schedule.

  This means:

  - Getting up at about the same time every day
  - Having meals, naps, and play times at about the same time every day
  - Going to bed at about the same time every night

Babies like to know what to expect every day and this kind of routine helps them get used to sleeping and being awake at regular times. Make an effort to stick to this routine even when you have visitors or are away from home.

- Have a routine for bedtimes and naps.

Do the same things, in the same order every day at bedtime. A routine at naptime will help your baby settle down to sleep during the day.

A bedtime routine should be quiet and calming. It could include: a feeding, a bath and tooth brushing, a massage or quiet play, a bedtime story or song, a night kiss, and lights out.

You and your baby will find a routine that works for you. What matters is that your routine calms your baby, stays the same, and happens at about the same time every day.

Bedtime routines work best when every one who cares for your baby knows and follows them.

It's the same for naptime routines. They can be very simple—a feeding, a cuddle, and a kiss. Find a routine that works for you. Do it at about the same time and the same way every day.

Added info...

Turn off the lights and TV in the room where your baby sleeps.

Light and noise can make it harder for your baby to get the rest he needs.

- **Watch your baby's cues.**

  Bedtime and naptime routines work best when you plan them for times when your baby is *starting* to get tired. Your baby will let you know when she's tired. She might rub her eyes or yawn. She might become less active or less interested in what's going on. She might get very quiet. She might get fussy, cranky, or whiny.

Added info...

Naptimes are important!

Making sure your baby gets naps during the day will help him sleep at night.

Babies can have a hard time falling asleep at night because they are **too** tired.

Safe places to sleep

The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends that after 6 months, the safest place for babies to sleep is in their own crib, either in their own room or in their parent's room.

If your baby has been sleeping in a crib in your room, you can continue with this. Or you can move your baby's crib to another room. Either choice is safe. Do whatever feels most comfortable for you and your baby.

Added info...

Co-sleeping means that your baby is near you, but in his own crib. Research has shown that this is safe and may reduce the risk of SIDS.

Bed-sharing means bringing your baby into your bed.

Bed-sharing

Many breastfeeding mothers enjoy the closeness of sharing their bed with their baby and find that it makes nighttime feedings easier.

There has been a lot of research looking at whether bed-sharing is safe or whether it increases the risk of SIDS. One thing that the research shows is that if you smoked during pregnancy or if you smoke now, bed-sharing increases the risk of SIDS.

The safest approach is co-sleeping. Have your baby sleep in a crib near you. Bring her into your bed to breastfeed and return her to her own crib after the feeding.

If you are a breastfeeding mother who does not smoke and did not smoke during pregnancy, you can make bed-sharing as safe as possible by being sure that:

- Your mattress is firm. No waterbeds, soft mattresses, or cushions.
- Your baby can't fall out of bed or get stuck between the mattress and the wall. He can't get trapped under the sheets, blankets or pillows.
- Your partner knows the baby is in the bed.
- Your baby sleeps on his back when he's finished feeding.

It is NOT SAFE to bring your baby into bed with you if there is any reason that you might find it hard to respond to your baby. This could be because you or any other person in the bed:

- Are so tired that you might have trouble waking up when your baby cries.
- Have an illness or condition that could affect your ability to respond to your baby.
- Have taken medicine that could make you very sleepy.
- Have used alcohol or other drugs.

It is NOT SAFE to bring your baby into bed with you if you (or any other person in the bed) smoke—even if you never smoke in bed. If you smoked during pregnancy or after the baby's birth, it increases the risk of SIDS. If you smoke, sharing a bed with your baby increases this risk even more.

It is NOT SAFE to sleep with your baby on a sofa, armchair, or recliner. They can fall off or get stuck between the cushions and the back of the sofa.

It is NOT SAFE for pets to sleep with your baby.

Moving your baby to another room

Over time, your baby will gradually make the move to sleeping in another room. There is no hurry for this. Do what works best for you and your baby.

It's not always easy for a baby to get used to sleeping in a different room. You are the most important person in your baby's life and she worries when she can't see you. When she wakes up alone, she may need to see you before she can relax and go back to sleep.

There are several things you can do to help your baby get used to sleeping alone.

- **Help your baby learn to soothe herself to sleep.**

  Lay your baby in her crib when she's drowsy, but still awake. Give her the chance to soothe herself to sleep by making sure her sleeping area is quiet and the lights are dim. Some babies like soft music or a mobile over their bed to look at.

  Babies often soothe themselves to sleep by sucking on their fingers.

  Everyone wakes up several times during the night. Most of the time we put ourselves back to sleep so quickly that we don't even remember we've been awake. If your baby learns to soothe herself to sleep when she first goes to bed, it's more likely that she'll be able to soothe herself back to sleep when she wakes up during the night.

CAUTION!

Remove mobiles from the crib as soon as your baby can sit up by himself.

- **If your baby wakes up and is making noises or calling, give her a few minutes to soothe herself back to sleep.**

  If your baby is still awake after about 5 minutes, go to her. Leave the lights off. Comfort her without picking her up. You can talk softly, stroke her head or pat her tummy. Let her know you're there and you love her. Then leave. Playing with her or doing anything fun or interesting will just give her a reason to stay awake.

  If your baby calls you again, go to her and do the same thing again. If she wakes up later on, keep going to her, comforting her, and then leaving. Soon you should both be sleeping better! If you've done this for two weeks and your baby is still not sleeping, talk to your health care provider or call Public Health Services (contact information, page 123).

- **If your baby wakes up crying loudly go to her and comfort her right away.**

  When babies are actively crying they can't soothe themselves and need your comfort. The longer they cry, the more upset they become and the harder it is for them to go back to sleep. Pay attention to your baby's cries. You'll soon learn which ones you need to respond to quickly.

Added info...

Your baby's sleep patterns may change when she is sick or teething. If your baby is sick, pick her up and comfort her. A sick baby needs care day or night.

You'll find information on how to soothe a teething baby on page 104.

Added info...

Learn your baby's cues.

Many babies still need to be fed during the night. Pay attention to your baby's cues so you can tell when she's hungry.

For many breastfed babies, breastfeeding is an important source of comfort as well as nourishment. Follow your instincts and your baby's cues to give her what she needs to soothe herself back to sleep.

CAUTION!

Never prop a bottle or a sippy cup. Never put your baby or toddler to bed with a bottle or a sippy cup.

This can cause ear infections and choking. It can also cause early childhood tooth decay. (See pages 102 to 103.)

Reducing the risk of SIDS

SIDS—Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or Crib Death—is the sudden death of a baby who seemed perfectly healthy. SIDS is the most common cause of death in babies' first year of life. SIDS usually happens while the baby is sleeping.

No one knows what causes SIDS. No one knows how to prevent it.

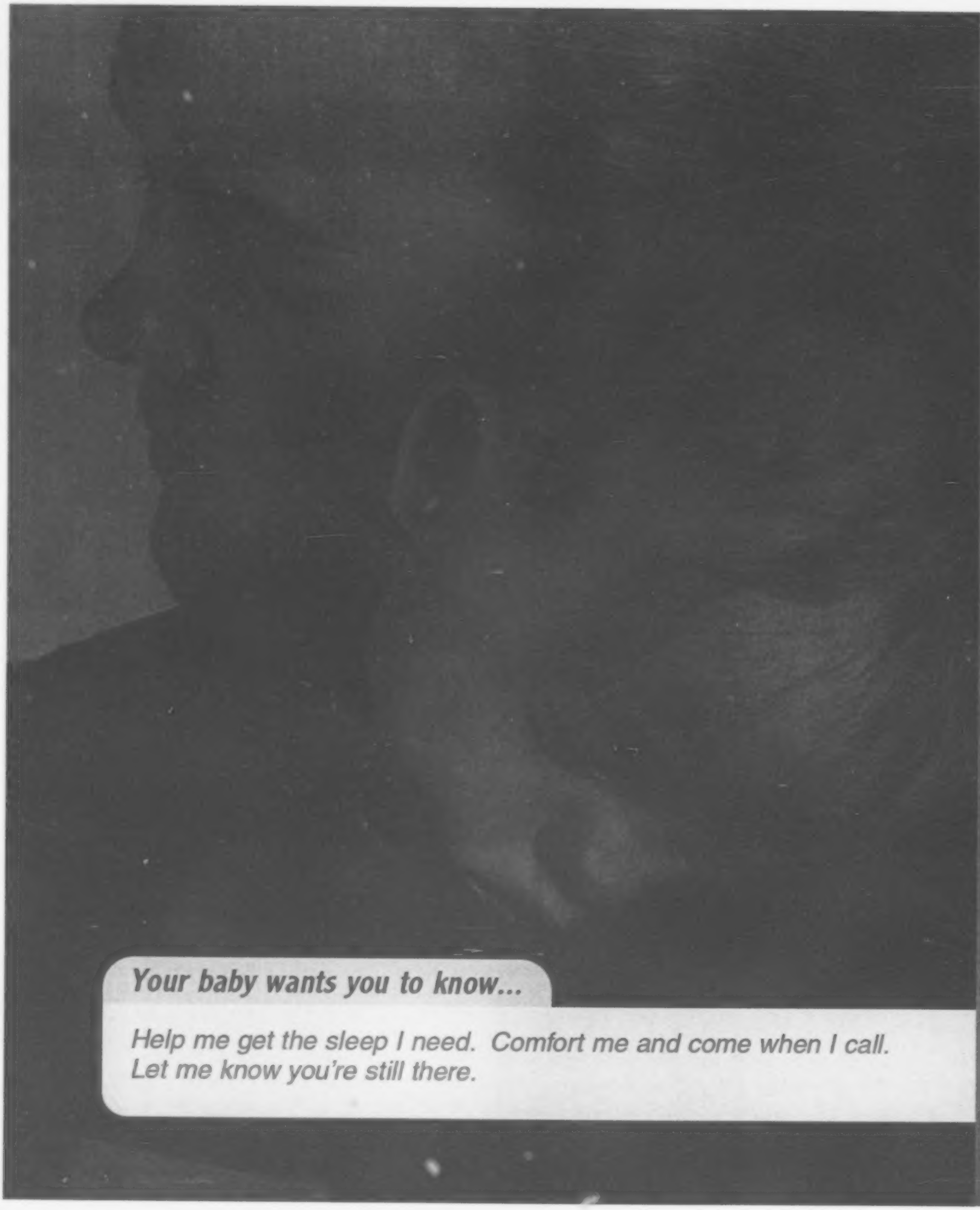
But we do know that there are things parents can do to make SIDS **less likely**. Since parents started following these suggestions, the number of babies dying from SIDS in Canada has been cut almost in half.

SIDS is LESS LIKELY to happen when:

- Babies sleep on their back
- Babies live in a smoke-free home
- Babies are breastfed
- Babies are not too hot
- The crib has a firm mattress. There should be no pillows, comforters, stuffed toys, or bumper pads in cribs. If your baby needs a blanket, a knitted or crocheted blanket is a good choice.

Double Check

See **page 106** for more information on a smoke-free home and car.



Your baby wants you to know...

Help me get the sleep I need. Comfort me and come when I call. Let me know you're still there.

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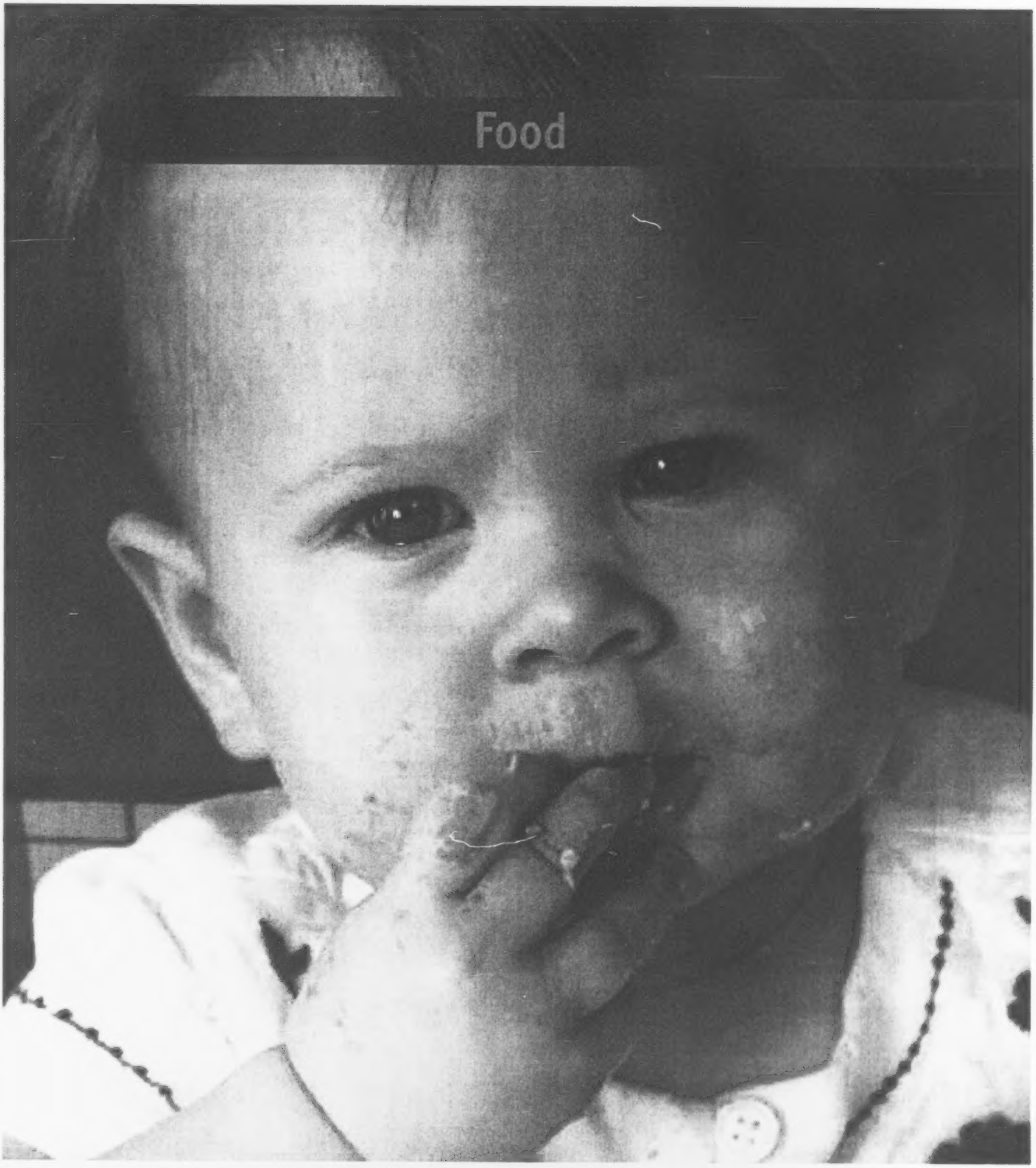


Food

My baby is growing so fast! Is she ready for solid food?

New research on feeding your baby

This section of Loving Care is about how to introduce your baby to solid foods. When you introduce your baby to solid foods at 6 months, you are helping her get ready to eat family foods—the kinds of foods you and your family enjoy.

There is a lot of new information in this section. Some of it may sound strange or be different from the way you were fed or how you've fed your other children. It may be different from the way your culture introduces solid foods.

All of the advice in this section is based on the best research we could find.

The important points about introducing your baby to solid foods are:

- Your baby is ready to start trying solid foods at 6 months.

  Before this, she doesn't have the skills she needs to swallow solid foods and her body isn't ready to handle them.

- Solid food won't be your baby's main source of nourishment until she's 12 months old.

  This is a time for your baby to get used to the new tastes and textures of food. It's a time for her to explore and learn to enjoy healthy food.

- You can trust your baby to know how much to eat.

  Babies know when they are hungry and when they've had enough. Never force food into your baby's mouth.

- You and your baby both have a role.

  You decide what food to offer your baby. You decide where and at what times to offer food to your baby. Your baby decides which foods she'll eat, how much she eats, and whether or not she eats.

This is an exciting time for your baby! Over the next 6 months, she'll taste new flavours, feel new textures, and learn to like new foods.

This is when she begins learning to enjoy the healthy foods her family likes. This is when she starts to develop feelings about food and eating that will last a lifetime.

Added info...

Continue to breastfeed for as long as you and your baby enjoy it. The Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Health Canada, the Canadian Pediatric Society, and the World Health Organization all recommend breastfeeding up to two years and beyond.

Double Check

Many parents are concerned about food allergies. You'll find information about this on **page 89**.

Introduce family foods at 6 months

Six months may be older than you were when your parents first gave you solid foods. It may be different from what others tell you. But there are good reasons to wait until 6 months.

- By 6 months, babies are able to begin learning how to swallow, chew, and pick up solid food.
- By 6 months, babies' bodies are ready for solid food.
- By 6 months, babies need foods that contain iron.

REMEMBER: Solid food won't be your baby's main source of nourishment until he's about 12 months old. He will eat very little solid food at first. Over time, he'll eat more. While your baby is making this gradual change to solid foods, breastmilk will continue to be his main source of nourishment. As he grows, your baby will gradually get more nourishment from solid foods.

If you're using formula, formula will continue to be your baby's main source of nourishment until about 9 months. After that, you can gradually switch from formula to cow's milk.

Added info...

Try not to compare your baby to other babies.

Healthy babies come in all weights, shapes, and sizes.

They grow and gain weight at different rates.

Signs that your baby is ready for solid foods

Once your baby is 6 months old, you can begin looking for signs that she's ready to try solid food. These include:

- Holding her head up
- Sitting up in a high chair
- Showing when she wants food by opening her mouth wide when you offer food on a spoon
- Closing her lips over the spoon
- Keeping food in her mouth and swallowing it instead of pushing it out
- Showing when she doesn't want food by turning away, keeping her mouth closed, or pushing the food away

When your baby can do all of these things, she's ready to start solid foods.

Follow your baby's cues (cues are listed on page 66). If you offer solid food and your baby isn't interested or spits it out, try again in a few minutes. If she's still not interested or keeps spitting it out, wait a day or two. Then try again. It takes time for your baby to learn to move food around in her mouth and to swallow it.

Talk to your health care provider if you're not sure if your baby is ready for solid foods or if you're worried because your baby isn't eating solid foods.

Added info...

Your baby doesn't need to have teeth to be ready for solid food!

Hunger and fullness cues

Even before your baby can talk, he has ways to let you know when he's hungry and when he's had enough to eat.

Cues that your baby is hungry:

- Turns toward food
- Opens his mouth when he sees the food
- Gets excited when he sees food or when you say things like, "Let's have lunch" or "Time for a snack"

Added info...

Babies have tiny tummies and will need to feed often. Pay attention to your baby's cues. You can depend on him to let you know when he's hungry.

Cues that your baby has had enough to eat:

- Turns his head away
- Doesn't open his mouth
- Pushes the spoon away

All babies are different. Your baby may have cues of his own to tell you when he's hungry and when he's had enough. Pay attention and follow your baby's cues. Trust your baby to let you know how much he wants to eat.

How much will my baby eat?

Your baby will eat very little solid food at first. Don't be surprised if at first your baby just takes a taste or eats less than a teaspoon.

She'll gradually eat more as she grows.

As your baby starts eating family foods, her appetite will change from day to day and from meal to meal. Sometimes she'll be hungry and want to eat more. Other times she'll want less.

Your baby's interest in eating will depend on:

- How much fluid she's getting.

  If your baby gets more breastmilk than usual, she might be less interested in solid foods at her next meal. If you are formula feeding and your baby gets more formula than usual, she'll also be likely to eat less.

- How much she's growing.

  Babies eat more during growth spurts.

- How she's feeling.

  Babies may eat less when they're tired, sick, or teething.

- What's going on around her while she's eating.

  Your baby may be more interested in the noise from other children, TV, toys, or the phone than she is in eating.

- The time of day.

  A baby's appetite can change from meal to meal. For example, some babies like to eat more in the morning and less in the evenings.

You may be wondering why this book doesn't suggest the amount of food a baby should eat at each meal or during each day. When books like this say that a baby should get a certain amount of food at a meal, parents sometimes worry if their baby eats more or less than this amount. They may want their baby to eat more or to clean her plate.

Your baby was born knowing when she's hungry and when she's full. Your job is to offer healthy foods and help your baby enjoy eating. Your baby's job is to decide how much she wants to eat. Follow your baby's cues. Feed her when she shows you she's hungry. Stop feeding her when she shows you she's had enough to eat.

Watch closely! Your baby's cues may not always be easy to see.

It's not important that your baby eat a certain number of spoonfuls at each meal. Allowing your baby to decide for herself how much she needs to eat is what matters most.

Added info...

Expect a mess!

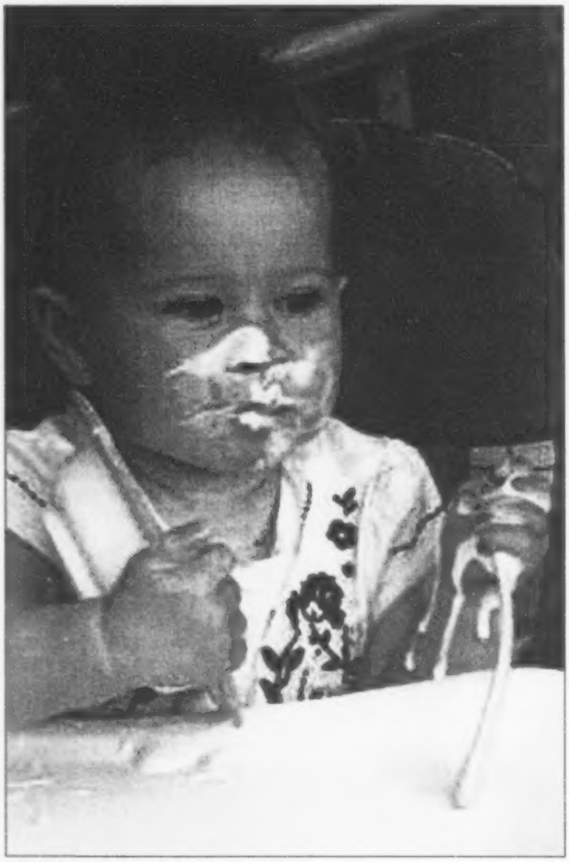
Squeezing, splashing, rubbing, feeling, and playing with food are a part of learning to enjoy eating!

Let your baby explore her food with her hands.

Let your baby feed herself with her fingers or a spoon when she is able.

Learning to feed herself is an important part of a baby's development. It builds her muscle skills and her confidence too!

It takes time for babies to develop the muscle control they need to feed themselves neatly. Cleaning up the mess may not be much fun, but it's important for you to be patient while your baby learns these skills.

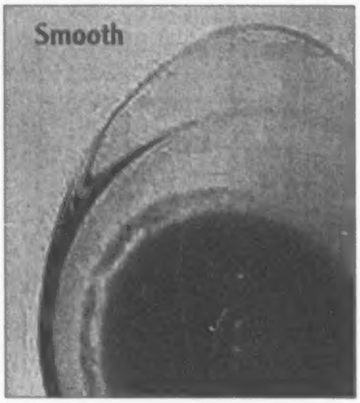


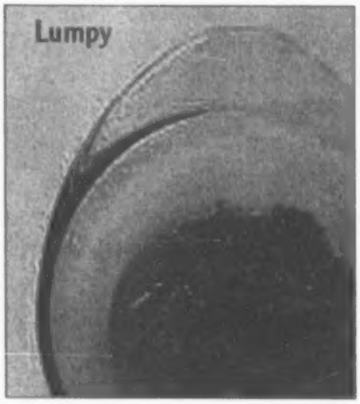
Added info...

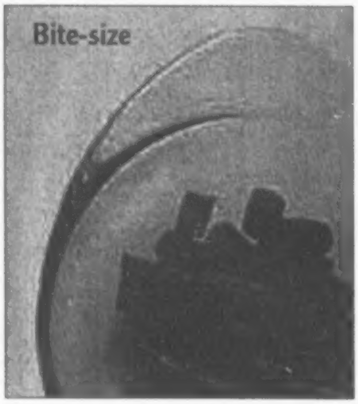
Sitting face-to-face while feeding helps you connect with your baby. Facing your baby allows you to make eye contact and see your baby's cues.

Mealtimes can be a time of learning and love for you and your baby. Talk to your baby about the colours, tastes, textures, and flavours of the food she's eating. Relaxed and happy mealtimes will help her to learn to enjoy healthy eating.

Food textures







The best way to introduce your baby to solid foods is to feed your baby the same healthy foods that your family eats, but with their texture changed to match what your baby is able to handle.

Between 6 and 12 months, your baby is learning a lot about food and eating. He'll learn to:

- Swallow
- Move food from the front of his tongue to the back of his tongue
- Gum and chew food
- Pick up food
- Feed himself with his fingers
- Hold a spoon

You can help your baby learn these skills by changing the texture of the food he eats. Start with smooth foods and then move to lumpier foods.

The food texture that your baby can handle will depend on his stage of development. Remember that all babies are different and will develop skills in their own time. Don't worry if your baby is a little earlier or a little later than other babies.

It's simple to change the texture of your baby's food. You can mash, chop, or grate it. You can use a fork, potato masher, food grater, baby food grinder, food processor, or blender. Use whatever you have.

Baby food can be made and frozen in an ice cube tray to use later. You don't need to make and freeze large batches of pureed baby food. Your baby won't need this smooth food for long and will soon be eating lumpier foods.

You don't need store-bought baby foods. They cost more than the food you prepare at home and are not always the kinds of foods that your family eats. They may not provide the textures your baby needs.

If you do buy baby food, read the list of ingredients on the label so you'll know what you're feeding your baby. Check the best before date before you buy or use it.

Feed your baby safely

Feed your baby from a bowl

It's not safe to feed your baby from a container or jar and then put the leftover food back in the fridge to finish later. This is because the spoon carries germs from your baby's mouth into the food. These germs can then grow in the food and make your baby sick the next time you use the food.

When feeding your baby with a spoon, take the amount of food you'll be using out of the container and put it in a bowl. After your baby is finished, throw away any food left in the bowl.

CAUTION!

Honey is not safe for babies under 1 year. Do not give your baby honey, or any kind of food made with honey, for the first year. This includes baked and cooked foods that contain honey. Don't put honey on a soother.

Honey can cause infant botulism, a kind of food poisoning that only affects babies. After 12 months, your baby will be developed enough for it to be safe to eat honey.

No hot foods

Your baby's food can be cold, room temperature, or warm—never hot. If you warm your baby's food, stir it well to make sure there are no hot spots.

Safe seats

To protect your baby from choking, be sure she's sitting up straight while eating.

The safest place for your baby while eating is sitting up in a high chair. Do up the seat belt to help keep your baby safe.

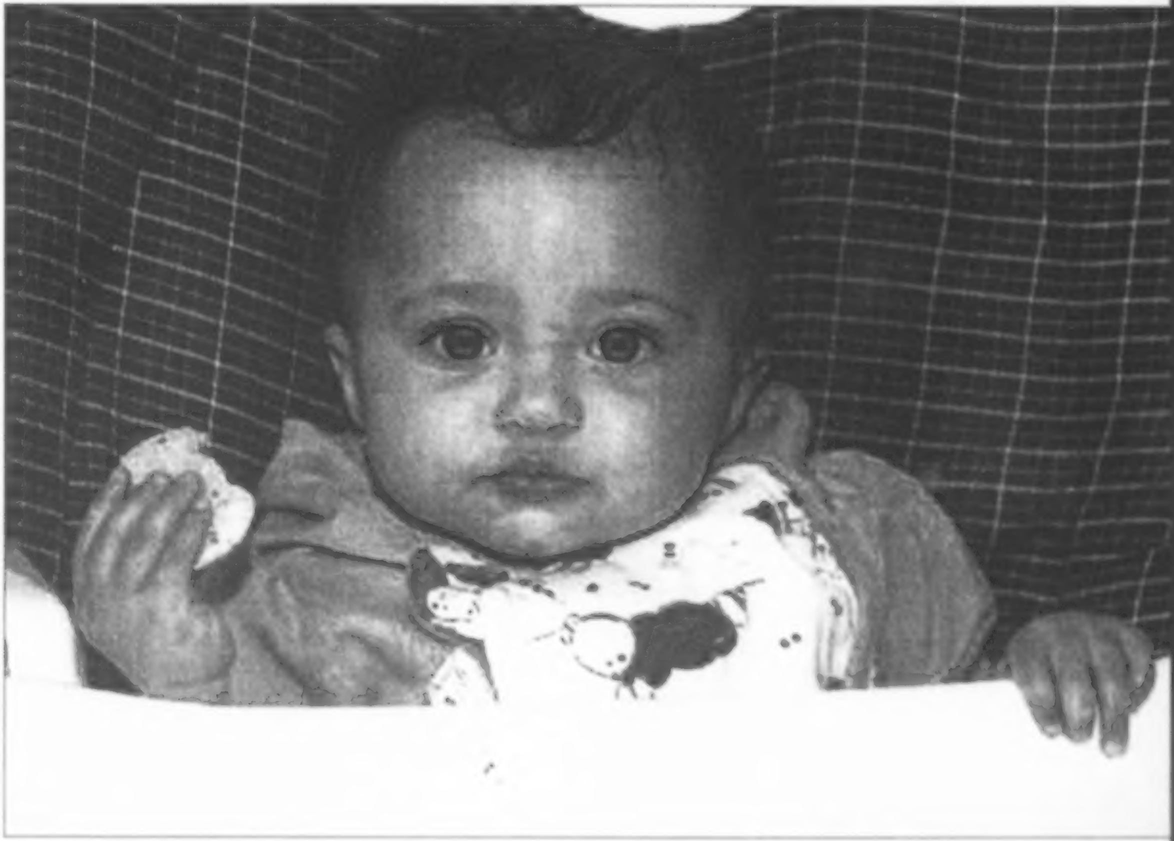
Double Check

You'll find more information on choking on **page 87**.

You'll find more information on storing and preparing food safely on **page 91**.

CAUTION!

Never leave your baby alone while she's eating.



Feeding your baby solid foods for the first time

When your baby is ready for solid foods, start slowly. At first, offer small amounts of solid food. Watch for your baby's cues. Your baby will let you know when he is ready to eat more.

To feed your baby:

- Sit facing your baby.
- Put a tiny bit of food on the tip of a small spoon. Hold the spoon so your baby can see it. Then put some food on his lips. Put food in his mouth only if he opens it.

Be patient. This is the first time your baby is experiencing solid food. Give him time to learn to move it around in his mouth and swallow it. If your baby doesn't swallow the food, wait a few minutes and try again. If he's still not interested, try again in a few days.

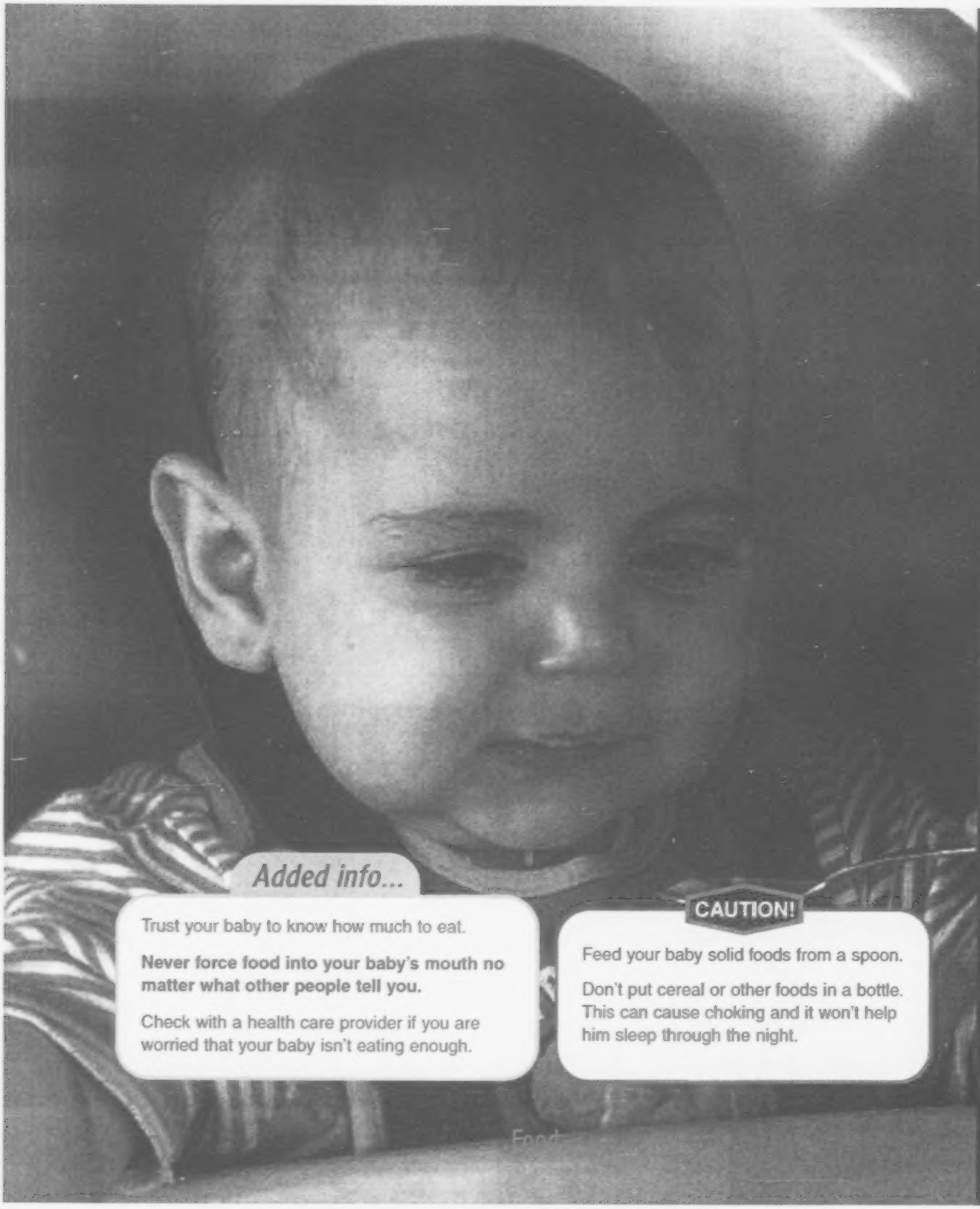
Over time, offer your baby more food. Let your baby guide you. He'll decide how much he needs to eat.

Give your baby time to have fun getting used to the new tastes and textures. Let him go at his own pace as he learns about food and eating.

Added info...

Babies often make faces when trying new foods and new textures. This is normal. He's getting used to something new. It doesn't mean that the baby doesn't like the food.

Sometimes your baby may refuse to eat a certain food. Don't worry about it. Just offer the food again in a few days. Keep trying. Your baby may need to try a new food many, many times before he decides to eat it.



Added info...

Trust your baby to know how much to eat.

Never force food into your baby's mouth no matter what other people tell you.

Check with a health care provider if you are worried that your baby isn't eating enough.

CAUTION!

Feed your baby solid foods from a spoon.

Don't put cereal or other foods in a bottle. This can cause choking and it won't help him sleep through the night.

First foods

The first solid foods to feed your baby are foods that contain iron. This is because by 6 months, the iron your baby had in her body at birth has been used up and she needs iron-rich foods added to her diet.

Meat and alternatives or infant cereals are good sources of iron for your baby. You'll find a list of iron-rich foods in the chart on page 76-77.

After your baby has started eating iron-rich foods, you can start to introduce other foods like vegetables and fruit.

Remember: Your baby will eat very little at first—for example, less than a teaspoonful. Gradually, she'll eat more. The important thing is to follow your baby's fullness cues and stop feeding when she shows you she's had enough to eat.

Between 6 and 12 months, your baby will begin to eat foods from all of the four food groups. She'll start with smooth foods at 6 months and by 12 months will be eating finger foods and regular family foods. She'll be eating with her family and eating the foods her family eats.

The table on the next pages will give you some ideas about the kinds of foods to feed your baby.

Double Check

You'll find more information on the four food groups in ***Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.*** You'll find a copy in the back of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

CAUTION!

Fish is a great food for babies, but there are a few kinds of fish that Health Canada recommends that you be careful with.

- **Canned albacore tuna** may be high in mercury. Your baby should have no more than 40g (1.5 ounces) a **week** of this kind of fish.
- **Swordfish, shark, fresh or frozen tuna, marlin, and orange roughy** may also have high mercury levels. Your baby should have no more than 40g (1.5 ounces) a **month** of this kind of fish.
- **Escolar** contains a kind of oil that humans can't digest. Health Canada recommends that babies, children, pregnant women, and the elderly not eat it. Escolar is also called snake mackerel or oilfish.

For more information, see the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada website or the Health Canada website (contact information, page 126).

Added info...

If you are planning to feed your baby a vegetarian diet, you need to replace meat with meat alternatives—like tofu, beans, and lentils. These have the nourishment your baby needs to grow and develop.

Talk with a registered dietitian or public health nutritionist about how to do this.

Added info...

When choosing foods from the four food groups, think about buying foods produced here in NS or the Maritimes. Locally produced, nutritious foods are good for your baby, your family, and your community.

Locally produced foods are often fresher. They are better for the environment because they don't travel far to market and they have less packaging.

When you buy locally produced foods, you support local farmers and fishers. More of your money stays in your community.

Consider shopping at your local farmers' market. When you go to the grocery store, ask if locally grown foods are available.

Added info...

Your baby will learn to like the kinds of food you offer her. Get her started on a lifetime of healthy eating by offering her healthy foods right from the start.

When your baby is 6 months old and can…	Your baby is ready to…	Good foods to offer are…

- Hold her head up
- Sit up in a high chair
- Open her mouth wide when she sees food coming
- Close her lips over the spoon
- Make a chewing motion
- Move food from the front of her tongue to the back
- Swallow the food
- Turn her head to refuse food
 	
	- Be fed soft, smooth foods from a spoon
	
	Continue breastfeeding (If you are using formula, continue as usual.)
		[illegible]
		- Smooth, plain, infant cereals with iron. Mix cereal according to the directions on the package.
		Meats and alternatives
		- Puree or mash these in the liquid you cooked them in, water, or breastmilk. If you're formula feeding, you can use formula.
		- Meats and alternatives include:
		  - Beef
		  - Chicken
		  - Turkey
		  - Lamb
		  - Fish: white fish-like haddock, halibut, sole, and cod-salmon,and canned light tuna
		  - Pork
		  - Cooked eggs
		  - Tofu
		  - Well-cooked legumes such as beans, lentils, and chickpeas
		Vegetables and fruit
		- Cook, then mash or puree mild-tasting foods like squash, peas, sweet potatoes, green or yellow beans, apples, peaches, pears, apricots, and plums.

When your baby can …	**Your baby is ready to…**	**Good foods to offer are…**
- Sit on her own - Pick up food with her fingers	- Be fed thicker, lumpier food	Lumpier or thicker versions of foods he's already eating.

- Close her mouth on a cup rim
- Drink from a cup with some help

Continue breastfeeding (If you are using formula, continue as usual.)

[illegible]

- Infant cereal or small finger foods, like dry cereal

Meat and alternatives

- Chopped, minced, grated, or cut up

Vegetables and fruit

- Chopped, minced, grated, or cut up
  - Fruits: stewed, canned, or raw
  - Vegetables: cooked

When your baby can ...

- Use her fingers to feed herself
- Hold a spoon
- Try to hold her cup when drinking
- Bite and chew her food

Your baby is ready to...

- Pick up lumpy foods and pieces of soft food and feed herself with her fingers
- Drink from a cup with help

Continue to breastfeed (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk.)

You'll find more information on introducing cow's milk on page 78.

Good foods to offer are...

[illegible]

- Whole-grain finger foods—like pieces of bagel, dry toast strips, rice, roti, noodles, cooked pasta, flatbreads, cereal, and unsalted crackers

Meat and alternatives

- Bite-size pieces of tender meat, fish, cooked beans, and tofu.
- Peanut butter or other nut butters thinly spread on small pieces of whole grain bread or crackers

Vegetables and fruit

- Bite-size pieces of soft, cooked vegetables and fruit and soft, ripe fruit—like bananas, peaches, kiwi, cantaloupe, and avacado

Milk products

- Plain yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Shredded cheese
- Whole cow's milk (3.25% milk fat)

Healthy drinks for babies

Healthy drinks for 6 to 12 months

Breastmilk	Continue to breastfeed. Your breastfed baby will need 400 IU of vitamin D drops every day until he's at least 12 months old. You'll find more information about breastfeeding in **Breastfeeding Basics.** If you are feeding your baby with infant formula, continue following your baby's hunger cues. You'll find information about formula feeding in **How to Feed Your Baby with Infant Formula.**
Water	You can offer tap water as a drink between meals, especially in hot weather when your baby needs extra fluids.
Whole Cow's Milk (Homogenized 3.25%)	You can offer small amounts of whole cow's milk with meals and snacks after 9 months. At this age cow's milk doesn't replace breastmilk. If you are feeding your baby with infant formula, cow's milk can gradually replace formula. By 12 months of age your baby won't need formula anymore.

Added info...

If your family uses soy milk or other alternatives in place of cow's milk, talk with a registered dietitian or public health nutritionist before you give these to your baby.

CAUTION!

Soy milk is not the same as soy-based formula. If you use soy-based formula do not switch your baby to soy milk without checking with your health care provider.

Juice

Your baby does not need juice. It is not as nourishing as the whole fruit or vegetable it is made from. When babies fill up on juice, they eat less of the foods they need. Even 100% juice is high in sugar and can lead to tooth decay.

If you decide to give your baby juice:

- Wait until your baby is eating fruit and other foods.
- Serve juice in a cup, with a sit-down meal or snack. Giving juice in a bottle or sippy cup between meals can lead to tooth decay.
- Give your baby 100% pure fruit juices with no added sugar. You do not need to buy special baby juice. Just check the label to be sure the juice is pasteurized.
- Give your baby no more than 1/2 cup (125 ml) of fruit juice per day. You do not need to add water to the juice, but you can if you want to.

Added info...

Be sure that any drink you offer your baby—other than breastmilk, formula, and water—is pasteurized.

Look for the word "pasteurized" on the label.

Added info...

Water is the best drink for your baby between meals and snacks. Make sure your water is safe for your baby to drink.

Whether you get your water from a well or a municipal water supply, if there is lead in your pipes, pumps, or plumbing, Health Canada recommends that you let your cold water tap run for about 2 minutes every morning—or just flush your toilet. This will flush out lead and copper that could build up in the water overnight.

Hot water will draw out more lead and other minerals that may be in your plumbing. Always use cold tap water for drinking, cooking, filling your kettle, and mixing formula.

Some municipalities in Nova Scotia keep track of which houses get their water through lead pipes. You can call your municipal water supply to see if they know whether your pipes are lead.

If you get your water from a well be sure to have it tested before your baby drinks it.

The Nova Scotia Department of Environment recommends that your well water be tested every six months for bacteria and every two years for chemical content. A good time to test your well water is after snowmelt in the spring. You may also need to test your well water after a flood.

To find out what tests you need, how to do them, and what the results mean, contact the Nova Scotia Department of Environment: 1-877-9ENVIRO (1-877-936-8476)

What's a good time of day to feed my baby?

You know your baby best. Pick a time when your baby is awake, alert, and showing you that she's hungry. Eventually, your baby will enjoy having breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks with her family.

Between 6 and 8 months, offer your baby solid food 2 or 3 times a day. From 9 to 12 months, offer solid food 3 or 4 times a day. You can offer breastmilk before or after solid food. If you're formula feeding, you can offer formula before or after. Follow your baby's cues. Do whatever she likes best. Remember that it's your job to offer food. It's up to your baby to decide whether or not she'll eat it.

Offer your baby different kinds of foods from each food group. This will help her get used to—and enjoy—new tastes and textures.

You can also help develop your baby's love of healthy food by planning meals and snacks for about the same time each day. As your baby gets more and more of her nourishment from solid foods, she needs to be able to depend on eating at regular times.

The sample menu in this section will give you some ideas about when to feed your baby. The menu is only a guide. Different times and different foods may work better for your baby and family.

Double Check

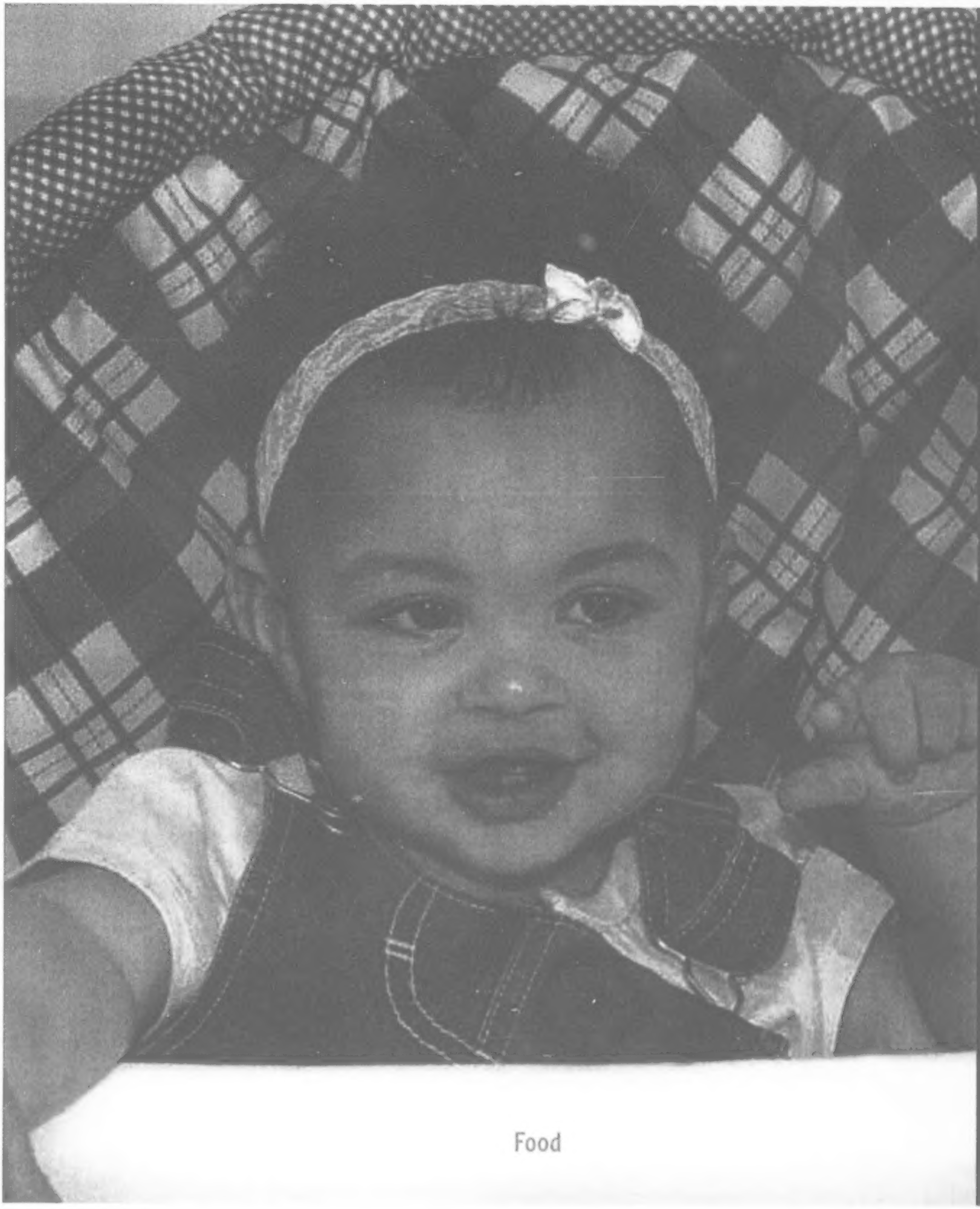
You'll find lists of healthy foods for babies at different stages on pages 76-77.

Added info...

Offer snacks for midway between meals.

Think of snacks as small meals, not as treats. A snack could be a feeding of breastmilk. If you are using formula, a formula feeding could be a snack. As your baby gets older, a snack could include other healthy foods.

Babies **need** snacks. They have small tummies and use a lot of energy.



Food

Sample Menu	Early morning	Breakfast	Snack
At 6 months	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.) Iron-fortified infant cereal	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)
From 6 - 8 months	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.) Iron-fortified infant cereal Mashed fruit	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)
From 9 - 12 months	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk.)	Breastmilk To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give breastmilk in a cup. (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk. To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give formula or cow's milk in a cup.) Iron-fortified infant cereal Soft fruit	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk. To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give formula or cow's milk in a cup.)

Lunch	Snack	Dinner	Snack
Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.) Iron-fortified infant cereal Plain pureed meat or meat alternatives	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)
Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.) Mashed or cooked vegetables Plain mashed or finely chopped meat or meat alternatives Iron-fortified infant cereal	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.) Plain mashed or finely chopped meat or meat alternatives Mashed, cooked vegetables or fruit	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, feed your baby as usual.)
Breastmilk To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give breastmilk in a cup. (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk. To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give formula or cow's milk in a cup.) Chopped meat or meat alternatives Cooked pasta or cooked rice Cooked vegetables, chopped or diced	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk.) Whole grain muffin Cubes of cheese	Breastmilk To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give breastmilk in a cup. (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk. To help your baby learn to drink from a cup, you can give formula or cow's milk in a cup.) Chopped meat or meat alternatives Cooked pasta or cooked rice Cooked vegetables, chopped or diced Soft fruit and/or plain yogurt	Breastmilk (If you are using formula, gradually replace formula with whole cow's milk.)

Foods and drinks to avoid

Some foods are not healthy for babies. Many families enjoy these kinds of foods once in a while or on special occasions. **But your baby is still too young for them.**

There are several reasons not to give these kinds of foods to your baby:

- They won't give him the nourishment he needs to grow and develop.
- If your baby gets sweet, salty, and fatty foods now, he may learn to like them and to prefer them to healthier foods. These foods can lead to health and dental problems.

Double Check

Honey is not safe for babies under 1 year. See **page 70** for more information.

Do not give your baby...

Food with lots of sugar

- Candy and chocolate
- Ice cream and frozen desserts
- Sweet desserts
- Cakes, cookies, pastry, granola bars, donuts, store-bought muffins
- Sweetened gelatin
- Pop, freezie/slushie type drinks, fruit-flavoured drinks
- Sugar coated cereals
- Jams and jellies

Do not give your baby....

Drinks with added sugar, artificial sweeteners, caffeine, or alcohol

- Pop, diet pop
- Fruit drinks, fruit punch, fruit beverages, lemonade
- Sports and energy drinks
- Coffee, tea, herbal tea
- Alcohol of any kind

Do not give your baby...
Food with lots of salt

- Pickles and olives
- Processed meats—like hot dogs, bologna, salami
- Ketchup
- Snack foods—such as chips, nachos, cheese puffs, pretzels
- Dry or canned soups
- Canned pasta

Do not give your baby...
Food with lots of fat

- French fries
- Gravy
- Butter, hard margarine, lard, shortening
- Salad dressing

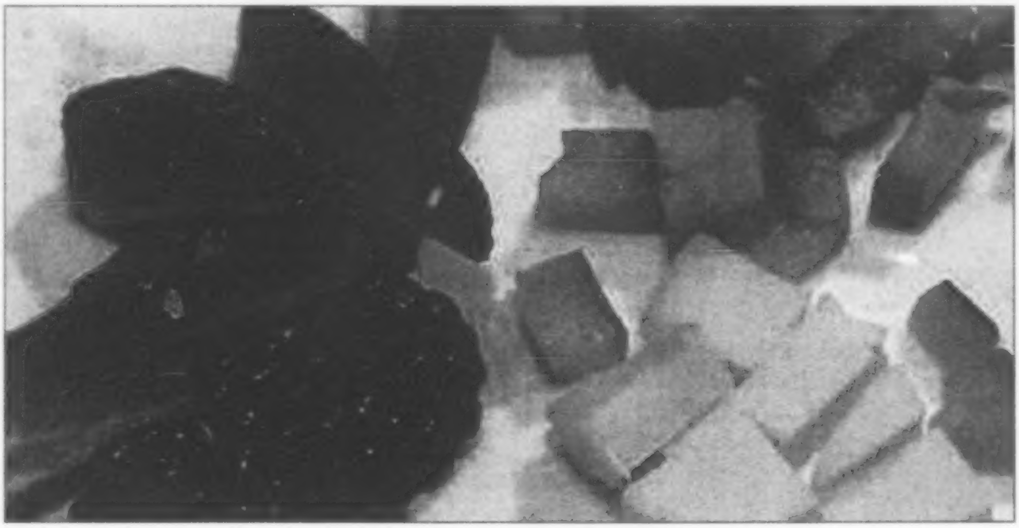
Double Check

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide is a good place to find information about healthy food choices.

It also contains information about how to read the Nutrition Facts Table on food labels.

You'll find a copy in the back of **Loving Care: Parents and Families**.

Keep in mind that you need to set an example of healthy eating by eating healthy foods most of the time.



Drinking from a cup

One of the skills your baby learns during this time is how to drink from a cup.

To drink from a cup, your baby has to learn to control the muscles in her mouth. This can take a lot of practice. Learning to drink from a cup is a messy business!

Many parents start their baby off with a sippy cup. This is fine, but it's not necessary. It's a good idea to help your baby learn to drink from a regular cup, too.

Whether you use a sippy cup or a regular cup, make sure your baby drinks while sitting at a table. Sit with her. This will help your baby develop a pattern of eating and drinking at regular meal and snack times.

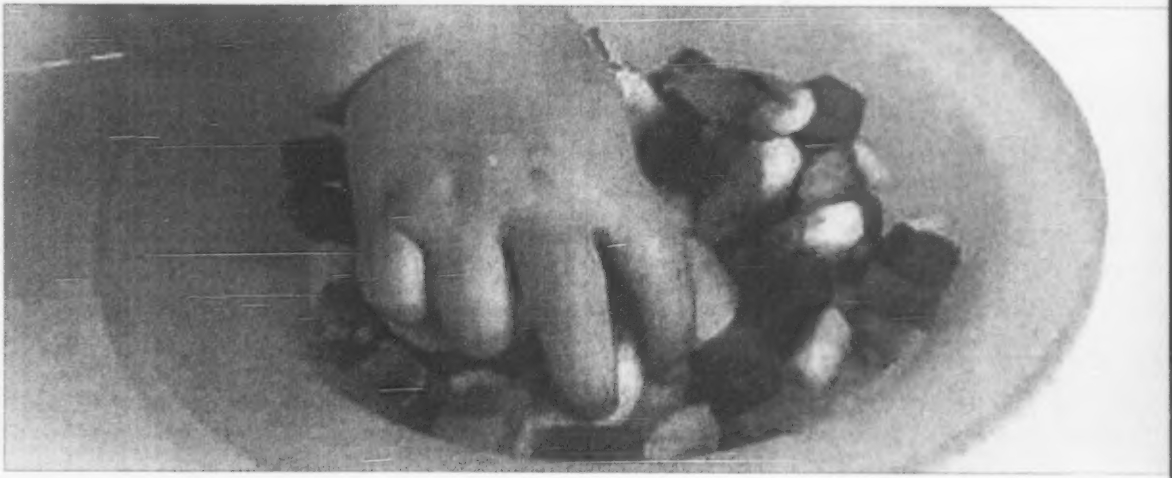
Don't let your baby carry around a sippy cup. Don't allow her to take it to bed with her. Continually sipping milk or juice can lead to early childhood tooth decay (for more information see pages 102-103). It can also fill your baby up so she won't eat well at mealtimes.

Added info...

To help your baby learn to drink from a cup:

- Use an unbreakable cup that doesn't tip over easily.
- Expect lots of spills! Cover your baby with a waterproof bib.
- Encourage your baby to hold the cup with you.

Gagging and choking



All babies gag and spit out food while they are learning to swallow. They may also gag when they first try lumpier or thicker foods. Gagging is a reflex that helps protect babies from choking. As they get better at eating solid food, they gag less.

Choking is much more serious. Babies choke when they get food stuck in their windpipe and can't breathe.

To protect your baby from choking on food:

- Be sure he's sitting up straight while eating.
- When your baby can pick up food himself, give him only a few pieces of food at a time.
- Stop feeding if your baby is crying or laughing.
- Do not feed your baby in a moving car.

You can also prevent choking by being careful that the food you give your baby has a texture that he can handle.

Added info...

Learn what to do if your baby chokes.

You can find contact information for First Aid classes on page 126.

Keep emergency phone numbers posted by the phone.

CAUTION!

Someone should always be with your baby while he's eating or drinking.

Foods that can cause choking	How to make these foods safer
Sticky spreads like peanut butter, tahini and almond butter	• Spread them thinly on whole grain breads or crackers. • Don't give blobs or spoonfuls of these foods.
Hard foods like some raw vegetables and fruit	• Cook hard foods to soften them. • Grate them into small pieces.
Round, smooth foods like grapes and cherries	• Cut each one into 4 small sections. • Remove seeds or pits.
Tube-shaped foods like cooked baby carrots	• Cut them lenghtwise into strips. • Cut the strips into small pieces.
Stringy or chewy foods like meat, long thin pasta, and melted cheese	• Cut these foods into small pieces.

CAUTION!

These foods can cause choking. They are NEVER safe for babies:

- Nuts, popcorn
- Hard candies, cough drops, gum
- Whole grapes, raisins
- Carrots cut into rounds
- Hot dogs
- Fish with bones
- Snacks using tooth picks or skewers

Food allergies

The information in this section is based on the most up-to-date allergy research. Some of it may sound strange to you or be different from what you've heard before.

For example, you may have heard that you should wait 2 to 3 days after giving your baby new food so you can see if she has an allergic reaction. This is not necessary. If your baby is allergic to food, she'll likely have a reaction soon after eating it.

You may also have heard that to prevent allergies you should wait until your baby is a certain age to introduce a particular food—like peanut butter. Research has shown that this is not necessary either. If your baby is allergic to food, she'll be allergic no matter when you introduce it.

Food allergies are not as common as you might think. Few babies have food allergies in the first year of their life. Even fewer have food allergies as they get older.

CAUTION!

Call 911 if your baby has a severe allergic reaction. You need help quickly.

Signs of severe allergic reaction are:

- Hard time breathing
- Can't swallow
- Mouth, tongue or throat swell up

Added info...

Some signs of allergy are:

- Rash or hives
- Pain in the stomach
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Watery or swollen eyes

Talk to your health care provider if your baby has any of these symptoms. They may be caused by a food allergy. However, there could be other reasons for the symptoms that have nothing to do with food.

Double Check

You'll find information on some things to do when looking for medical care in the *"Health Services"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

Eating together is important

Mealtimes are a time when families can connect with one another. Talking and spending this time together makes the bonds between you stronger.

When your baby is small, bring him to the table with everyone else. He'll learn to enjoy eating and enjoy this time together. As he gets older, he'll be used to eating and talking with everyone.

Try to make mealtimes a happy time for everyone. Turn off the TV and put toys away so you all can focus on eating and spending time together.

Eating together when your baby is small will pay off as he grows.

Added info...

Families come in many different shapes and sizes.

When we say "family" we mean people who care about one another. They may or may not live together, but they are important in each other's lives.

Your family can be you and your baby or can include whoever you want it to.

Double Check

You can find more information about eating well as a family in the *"All Parents"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

Family food safety

Food safety is important. Food poisoning can make anyone sick. But it can make babies and small children very sick. You can prevent food poisoning by being clean and careful when you handle, prepare, and store food.

Keep things clean

Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water:

- Before and after you handle food
- Before you feed your baby or children
- Before you eat

Keep your kitchen and everything you use to prepare food clean.

- Wash your kitchen counters with hot water and detergent before and after preparing food. Use paper towels or a clean dishcloth. Change the dishcloth every day.
- Wash everything you use to prepare food with detergent and hot water. Rinse them with hot water and let them air dry. Or you can wash them in the dishwasher. This includes cutting boards, bowls, pots and pans, utensils, can openers, and blenders.

Added info...

For extra protection, you can sanitize your counters, cutting boards, and utensils with a mixture of 5 ml (1 teaspoon) of bleach in 750 ml (3 cups) of water.

This is very important after preparing raw meat or poultry.

Added info...

You can't see, smell, or taste the bacteria that cause food poisoning.

Handle food carefully

Thaw food in the refrigerator, not on the counter.
You can also thaw food in the microwave if you will be cooking it right away.

Wash all fresh vegetables and fruits under running water.
Wash fruit by rubbing it with your hands. Use a brush to scrub firm vegetables and fruits—like potatoes, carrots, and melons.

Keep raw eggs, meat, fish and poultry away from other foods.
Keep them separate in your shopping cart, in your refrigerator, and while preparing food.

- Wash your hands, knife, and cutting board in hot water and detergent after you cut up raw meat, fish, or poultry. Do this BEFORE you touch other foods or use these utensils with other foods.
- If you can, use one cutting board for raw meat, poultry and fish, and a different cutting board for foods like fruits, vegetables, and bread.
- Wash plates and bowls that have held raw meat, poultry, fish, or eggs before putting any other food in them.

Double Check

To find out more about food safety, check the references listed on **page 126**.

Added info...

Fruit juice, cider, milk, and milk products should be pasteurized.

Cook food carefully

Cook meat and poultry using a meat thermometer.

Safe temperatures are:

- Pork, Veal, Lamb: 71°C (160°F)
- Ground Meat: 71°C (160°F)
- Whole Chicken/Turkey: 82°C (180°F) (Check the temperature in the thickest part of the thigh without touching a bone.)
- Chicken/Turkey with stuffing: 74°C (165°F) (Check the temperature in the centre of the stuffing.)
- Chicken/Turkey pieces: 77°C (170°F)
- Ground Poultry: 74°C (165°F)
- Beef Steaks/Roasts:
  - 63°C (145°F) medium rare
  - 71°C (160°F) medium
  - 77°C (170°F) well done

Cook eggs and fish all the way through.

Cook sprouts thoroughly.
It's not safe to eat raw sprouts because they can't be washed well enough to remove all the germs.

Store food carefully

Store food that can spoil in the refrigerator.
This includes: fruits and vegetables, meat, eggs, and dairy foods—like milk and cheese. Put all raw meats on the lowest shelf of the fridge. Put ready-to-eat foods on the shelves above.

Store food in unopened cans and jars in a cool, dry place.
Don't use food from cans that are dented, leaking or bulging. Don't use food from jars with loose, or bulging lids. If you buy a lot of canned foods at once, write the date on the can. Use them within 2 years or before their "best before" date. Once you've opened the can or jar, store the food in the refrigerator.

Serve food as soon as it's cooked.
Don't let leftovers or any kind of prepared food sit around at room temperature for longer than 2 hours. Refrigerate or freeze them right away.

Keep hot food hot and cold food cold.
This is especially important when traveling or at picnics, buffets, and barbeques. Use a freezer bag to keep food cold away from home. If you have any doubt about whether a food is safe, don't eat it.

Your baby wants you to know...

Your loving care helps me to feel safe and happy while I try new foods and learn to enjoy new tastes and textures. You're helping me learn healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.

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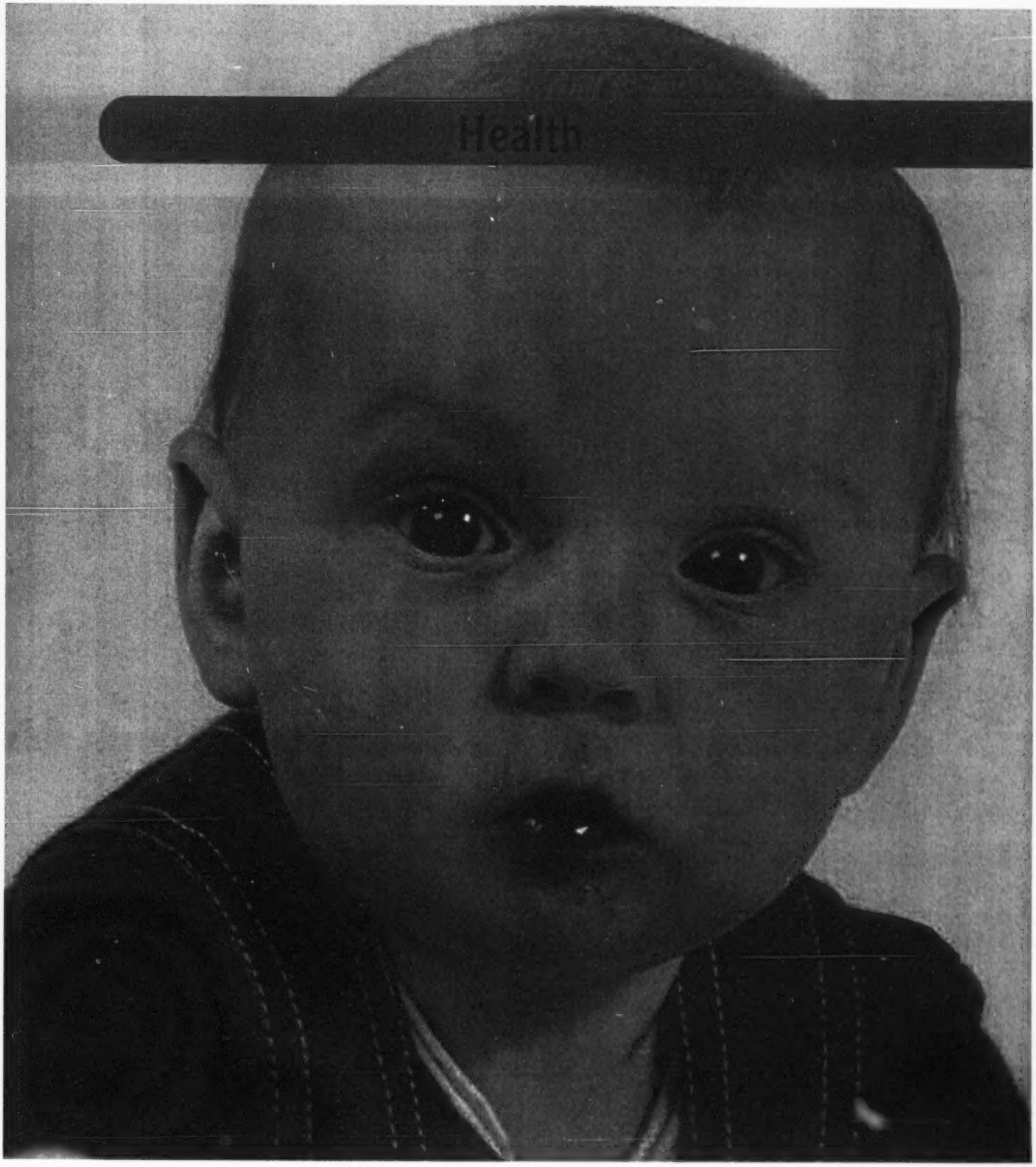
Health



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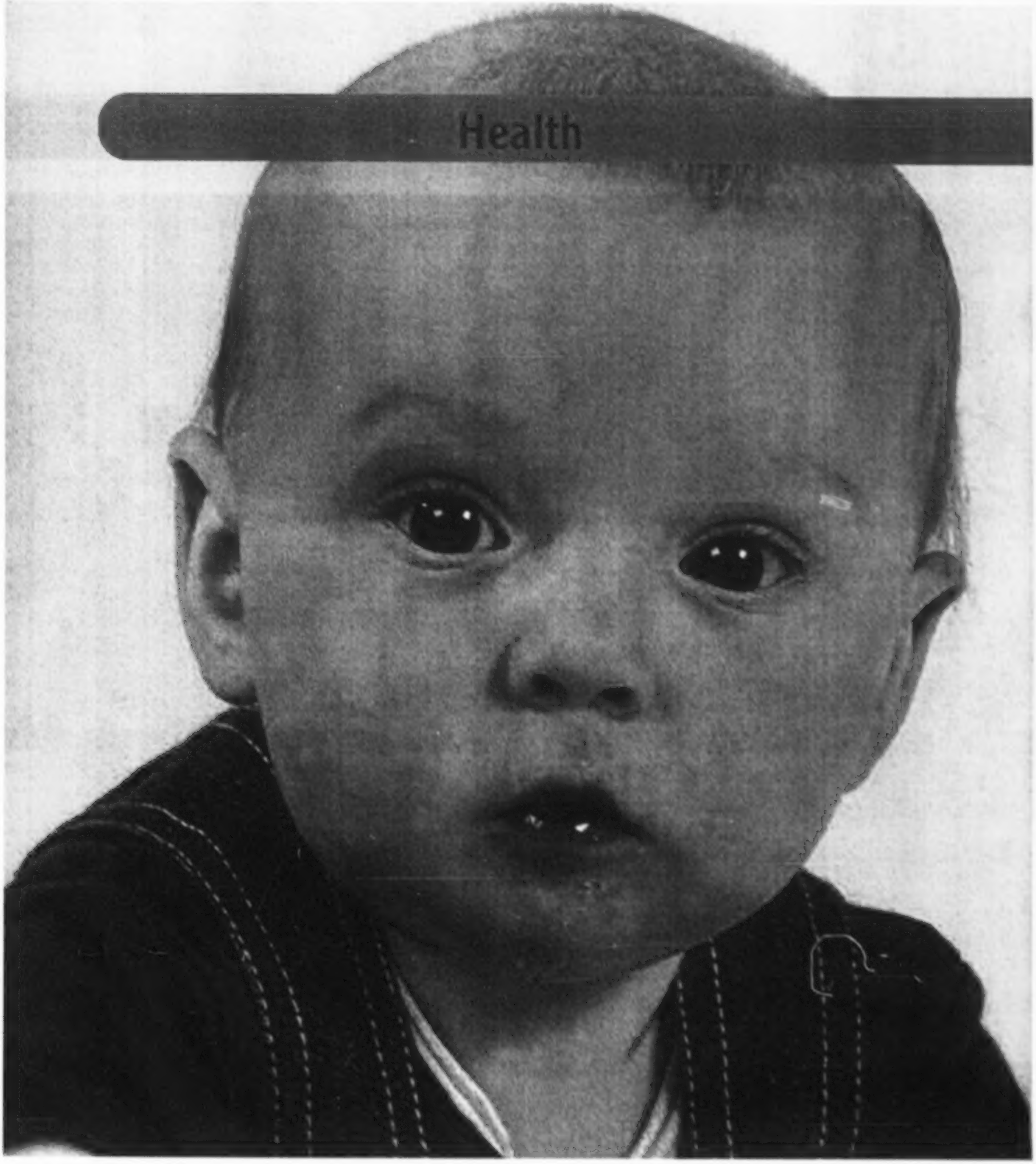
Health



My baby is healthy and strong. What can I do to help him stay that way?

Hand washing

Washing your hands with soap and water is one of the best and easiest things you can do to keep your baby—and your whole family—healthy. When you don't have access to water and soap, use hand sanitizer.

Everyone should wash their hands:

- Before eating and before feeding the baby
- Before cooking or preparing food
- Before cleaning your baby's mouth or teeth
- After changing a diaper
- After using the toilet
- After handling anything dirty
- After petting an animal
- After wiping their nose—or anyone else's nose —or sneezing or coughing into their hand

Added info...

When guests come into your home, have them wash their hands before they hold your baby. This includes grandparents and other family members.

Added info...

Wash your baby's hands, too. It's never too soon for your baby to get used to hand washing.

Immunizations

Immunizations protect your baby from serious illnesses. Your baby's needles are an important part of keeping him healthy.

Your baby should have had needles at 2 and 4 months.

He should get his next needles at 6 months. These protect him from diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, haemophilus influenzae type b, meningitis, pneumonia, and some ear infections.

At 12 months or soon after, your baby should get needles to protect him from measles, mumps and rubella, chicken pox, and meningitis. It's important that your baby not get these needles too early. If he gets them **before** his first birthday, they might not work.

If you miss any of these needles, contact your doctor or a local Public Health Services office to arrange for your baby to catch up.

Added info...

It's your responsibility to keep a record of your baby's needles. This is your only record of your child's immunizations. Your child will need this record as he gets older. You can use the yellow **Personal Immunization Record** card. This card also has a chart with all the needles your child will need up to age 6. If you don't have one, you can get one from your local Public Health Services office (contact information, page 123).

Added info...

Depending on where you live, your baby may get his needles from your doctor or from public health well-baby clinics.

Flu shots

The flu—also called influenza—is an infection caused by viruses. It affects the nose, throat and lungs, and can cause fever, tiredness, and aches and pains. Flu can make your baby very sick, very quickly.

Flu shots are a safe and effective way to reduce the risk that your baby will get this illness. If your baby does get the flu, it will be much less serious if she's had flu shots.

When your baby gets flu shots for the first time, she'll need 2 shots. These are given 4 weeks apart.

In Nova Scotia, flu shots are free for children between the ages of 6 months and 23 months. Getting a flu shot yourself will help protect your baby. You or anyone who cares for your baby can also get a free flu shot.

The best time to get a flu shot is between mid-October and December. A flu shot protects for only 6 months, so you need to get one every year.

You can get a flu shot for your baby from:

- Your doctor
- Public Health Services
- Community clinics

Added info...

Remember to take you baby's yellow **Personal Immunization Record** card when you go for flu shots.

Added info...

You can find out more about flu from your health care provider or local Public Health Services office (contact information, page 123).

What to say when you talk to a health care provider

When your baby is sick, your health care provider will ask questions about your baby's illness when you call or visit. It's a good idea to think about what's wrong and why you think your baby is sick before you talk to the health care provider.

The health care provider will ask about how your baby is feeling and what she's been doing:

- Fever? How high? How long has she had it?
- Chills or shaking?
- Throwing up? How often? What does it look like?
- Diarrhea? How often? How much? What does it look like?
- Cough or runny nose? Is she having trouble breathing?
- Not feeding? Has she lost weight?
- Hard, dry poop? When was her last poop?
- Does she have a rash?
- Is your baby acting differently than usual? Is she very sleepy or fussy?
- Have you given your baby any medicine?
- Has your baby been around someone who's recently been sick?

Write down your baby's symptoms as you notice them. If you can, write down the time you noticed them. Write down anything you think you might forget to tell the health care provider.

When you visit or talk to the health care provider, make sure you understand everything she tells you to do. If you're not sure, ask her to explain.

Added info...

If you are looking for a doctor who is taking new patients, check the Department of Health's website for "Doctors accepting new patients" (contact information, page 122).

Added info...

Nova Scotia has a Family Pharmacare Program to help with the cost of prescription drugs.

Some families are also eligible for a pharmacare program for low-income children (contact information for both programs, page 122).

When to see a health care provider

Trust your instincts. You know your baby best. If you are concerned about any change in your baby—either physical or in the way he behaves—see your health care provider. Don't worry about taking your baby to your health care provider too often.

Talk with a health care provider if your baby has any of these symptoms:

- Fever over 38.5°C (101°F)
- A hard time breathing
- Sleepy all the time. You have a hard time waking him up.
- Fewer wet diapers than usual or dark yellow, smelly pee
- Cries a lot more than usual or sounds different when crying
- No interest in eating or drinking
- Keeps rubbing or pulling on his ear
- Poop is different from usual—it could be very runny or liquid, or very hard and dry
- A cough that lasts for several days
- Diaper rash that is red and peeling or has sores in it
- Not alert or smiling at you
- Not interested in playing

Added info...

Use a plastic digital thermometer when you take your baby's temperature.

Put the thermometer in your baby's armpit. Keep the thermometer in place by gently pressing your baby's elbow against his side.

Wait 2 minutes or until you hear the beep. Check the temperature.

Double Check

You'll find information on some things to do when looking for medical care in the *"Welcome"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

CAUTION!

"Dehydration" means the loss of body fluids. It can happen very quickly when a baby has diarrhea or is vomiting.

Some signs of dehydration are:

- Not peeing—less than 4 wet diapers in a day or more than 8 hours without peeing
- Drowsiness
- Weakness
- Dry mouth and lips
- Thirstiness
- No tears when crying
- Sunken eyes

Dehydration is serious. See a health care provider right away if you think your baby is dehydrated.

CAUTION!

It's never safe to give your baby cough syrup.

Check with your health care provider or pharmacist before you give your baby any kind of medicine. This includes over-the-counter medicines like acetaminophen.

When giving your baby medicine, be careful to keep track of the amount you give. It's easy to give too much. To be safe:

- Have only one person give the medicine.
- Write down **when** you give the medicine.
- Write down **how much** you give.

If you think your baby has gotten too much medicine, contact your health care provider or IWK Regional Poison Centre (contact information, page 126).

Dental health

Healthy baby teeth are important for your baby's overall health. Pain and infection from tooth decay can make it hard for your baby to sleep, chew, and grow normally. They make it difficult for your baby to concentrate and learn. Baby teeth also help to shape your child's face and guide adult teeth into place.

Make cleaning your baby's mouth and teeth fun! Sing a song. Make up stories about cleaning away the sugar germs. As soon as he's old enough to hold a toothbrush, encourage him to help.

Baby teeth are worth taking care of! Start early to keep your baby cavity free for life.

1 Keep your baby's teeth and mouth clean.

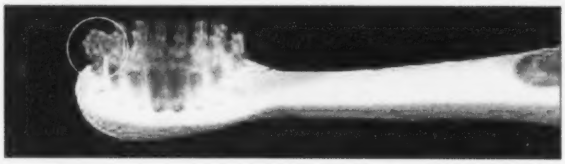
Before the teeth come in:

Clean the inside of your baby's mouth once a day.

- Wash your hands.
- Wrap a clean damp facecloth around your finger.
- Wipe the inside of baby's mouth and around the gums.

After the first tooth comes in:

- Twice a day—every morning and before going to bed every night—let your baby sit and chew on a soft-bristled toothbrush with a **small** smear of fluoride toothpaste.



- When your baby's done, gently brush his teeth and gums. Don't use more toothpaste. When you brush, lay your baby in a safe position. You need to support your baby's head so you can see his teeth clearly. Your hands should be clean and free to open baby's mouth and do the brushing.

- When you brush, check your baby's teeth for cavities.

  Lift up your baby's lips and look at the front and back teeth. If you notice brown or white spots on your baby's teeth, call a dentist right away. This may be the first sign of decay.

CAUTION!

Keep toothpaste out of children's reach.

2 Don't let food or drink stay on your baby's teeth.

- Never prop a bottle or a sippy cup. Never put your baby or toddler to bed with a bottle or a sippy cup. Juice (even 100% juice), milk, and formula all contain sugar. They can cause tooth decay when left on the teeth too long.
- Never allow your baby to sip all day on drinks other than water. If he sips all day on any drink that contains sugar—even milk and 100% juice—it increases the risk of tooth decay. Offer your baby milk or 100% juice at mealtime. Offer tap water to drink between meals. Have your baby sit in a high chair or at a small table for snacks and drinks.

Double Check

Healthy snacks are important for healthy teeth. Avoid sweet, sticky snacks.

Dried fruits and fruit leathers are healthy foods but they stick to the teeth and can cause cavities. If your children eat these foods, brush their teeth right away.

For more information about healthy eating, see the "Food" section of this book, pages 74 to 79.

3 See a dentist regularly.

- Take your baby for his first dental check-up by his first birthday. The dental team will check your child's risk for cavities and answer your questions. If you don't have a dentist, ask your friends and family for suggestions or check the yellow pages.
- Take your baby to a dentist if you see any white or brown spots on his teeth, or if he injures a tooth.

If you are concerned about the cost of dental care...

MSI covers basic dental care for children from birth up to the end of the month in which they turn 10.

For children covered by a co-pay dental plan, MSI will pay the portion that you would normally pay for these basic dental services and treatments.

You'll find contact information for the MSI Children's Oral Health Program on page 122 or you can talk to your dentist.

Added info...

What causes cavities?

Sugar in food and drinks plus plaque in the mouth can lead to tooth decay.

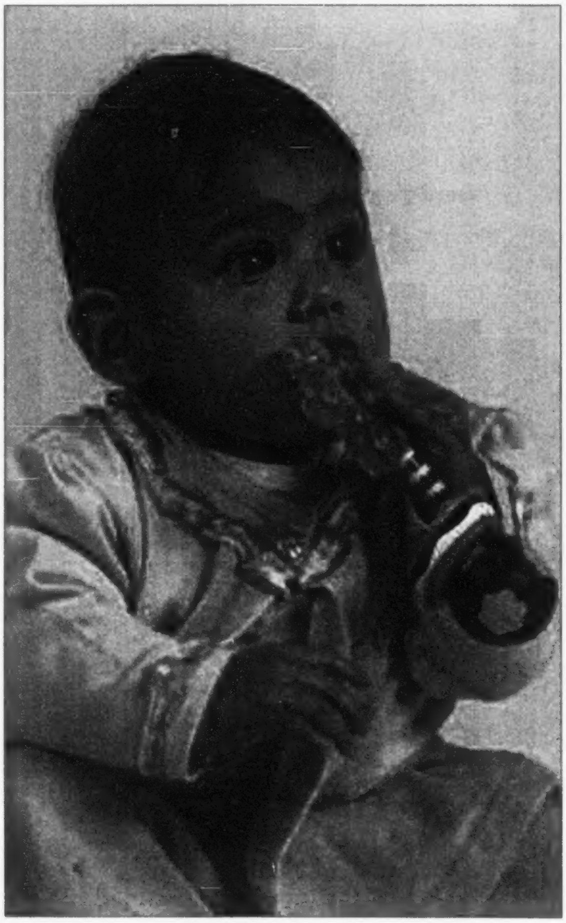
Plaque is a thin, hard-to-see layer of germs that covers the teeth and gums. These germs use the sugars in food and drink to make acid. This acid eats away the hard outer layer of the teeth—called enamel—and causes tooth decay.

The longer food and sugary drinks stay on the teeth, the greater the risk of tooth decay.

Germs that cause cavities can pass from your mouth to your baby. To protect your baby, take care of your own dental health.

Keep your own teeth and mouth clean. You will set a good example for your baby and there will be fewer cavity-causing germs in your mouth to pass along.

Teething



CAUTION!

Check with your dentist, health care provider, or pharmacist if you think your baby might need medicine for teething pain. Ask which kind to use and how much is best for your baby.

Teething is a natural process during which your baby's teeth push through the gums.

Most babies' first teeth start to come in at around 6 months. Some start teething a little earlier, some a little later. Most babies get the two middle teeth on the top and the two middle teeth on the bottom first. But all babies are different and some may get teeth in a different order.

Teething can make your baby restless and fussy. To help her feel better:

- **Give your baby a clean, cold facecloth to suck or chew.**
- **Give your baby a teething ring.** Teething rings should be cold but not frozen. Wash them often. Use warm, soapy water and rinse well before giving them to your baby.
- **Massage your baby's gums using a clean finger.**
- **Don't use teething biscuits.** Teething biscuits are high in sugar and may cause cavities.
- **Don't use teething gels.** They can affect your baby's health or cause choking by making the throat numb.

Fever or diarrhea is **not** a normal part of teething. If your baby has a fever or diarrhea for more than 24 hours, call your health care provider.

If your baby continues to be restless or fussy, check with your dentist or health care provider.

Thumb sucking and soothers

Thumb sucking and using soothers are not likely to hurt your baby's teeth as long as he stops by the time his permanent teeth start to come in at about age 5.

If you give your baby a soother:

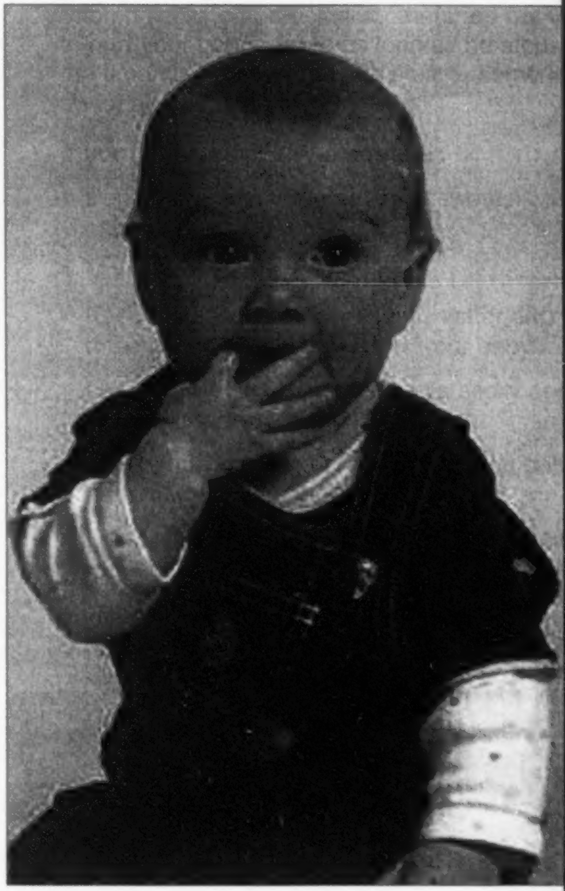
- Don't dip a soother in anything sweet, especially honey.
- Make sure it can't come apart.
- Keep it clean. Use warm soapy water and rinse it well before giving it to your baby.
- Get a new one when it becomes sticky or has cracks or tears.
- Don't put a soother on a string around baby's neck. Strings can choke.
- Don't pin pacifiers to clothes. Pins can hurt.

If you are concerned about thumb sucking or soothers, talk to your dentist or health care provider, or contact your local Public Health Services office (contact information, page 123).

CAUTION!

It's not safe to put honey on a soother.

Honey can cause infant botulism, a kind of food poisoning that only affects babies. After 12 months, your baby will be developed enough for it to be safe to eat honey.



A smoke-free home and car

One of the best things you can do for your baby's health is to give her a smoke-free home and car.

There is no level of indoor second-hand smoke that is safe for your baby. Second-hand smoke is even more dangerous for babies than for adults. Babies have smaller lungs and they breathe more quickly. This means they breathe in more smoke. There is a link between children who live with second-hand smoke and several serious illnesses. These include:

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Childhood cancer
- Leukemia
- Brain cancer
- Ear and lung infections
- Asthma

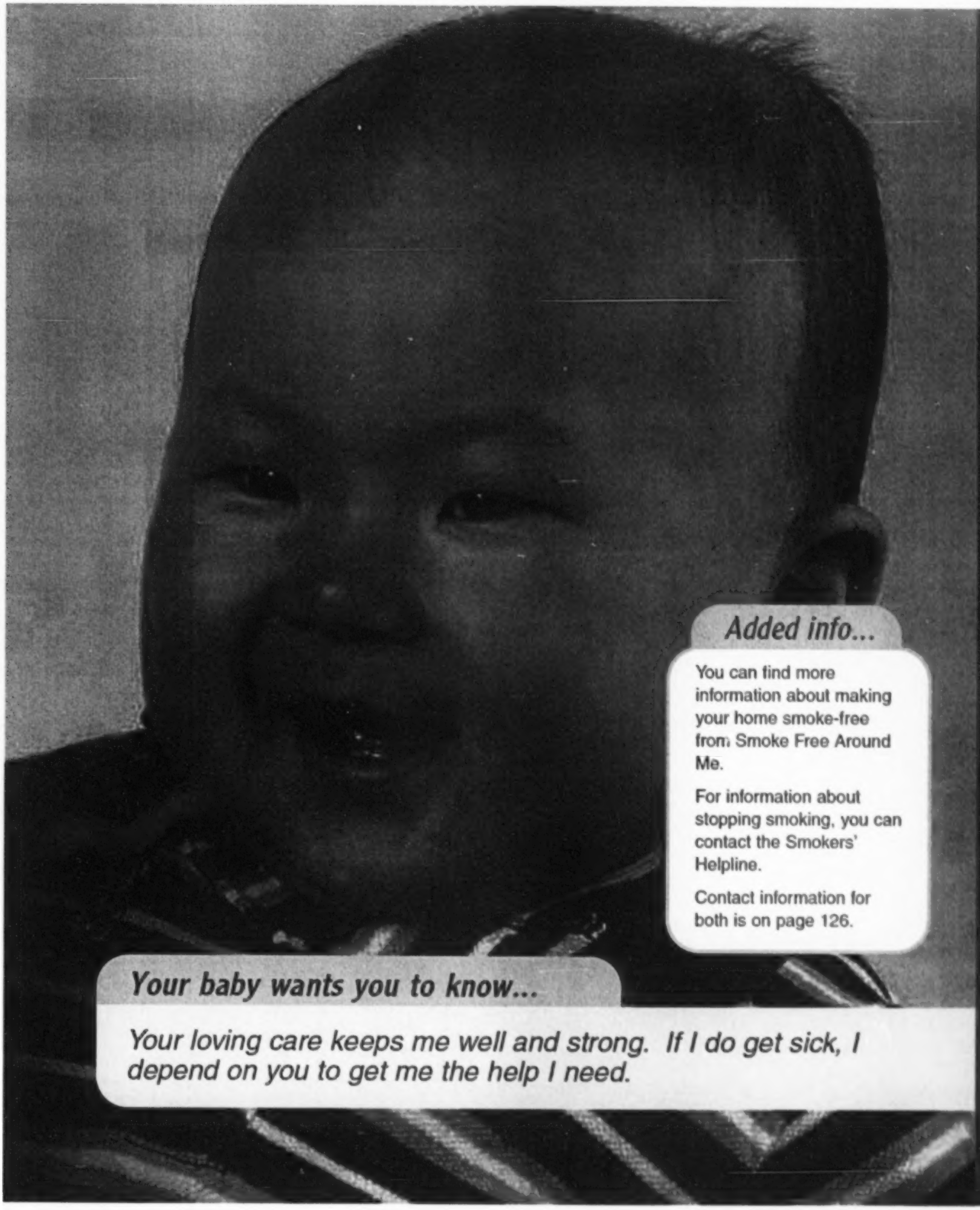
In Nova Scotia, it is illegal to smoke in a car with children present. Second-hand smoke in cars is even more dangerous than second hand smoke indoors. The smoke in a car builds up quickly, even with the window down. Smoking in the small space inside a car is 23 times more toxic than smoking in a home.

Your baby can't control the amount of second-hand smoke he's exposed to. Only you can do that. Air exchangers and open windows will not protect your baby from second-hand smoke. The only way to protect your baby is to make sure no one smokes in your home or your car.

Ask others who care about your baby not to smoke in their home when your baby is there. Remind them that it's illegal to smoke in their car when a baby is present.

Double Check

You'll find more information on smoking in the *"All Parents"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**



Added info...

You can find more information about making your home smoke-free from Smoke Free Around Me.

For information about stopping smoking, you can contact the Smokers' Helpline.

Contact information for both is on page 126.

Your baby wants you to know...

Your loving care keeps me well and strong. If I do get sick, I depend on you to get me the help I need.

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Car safety 117
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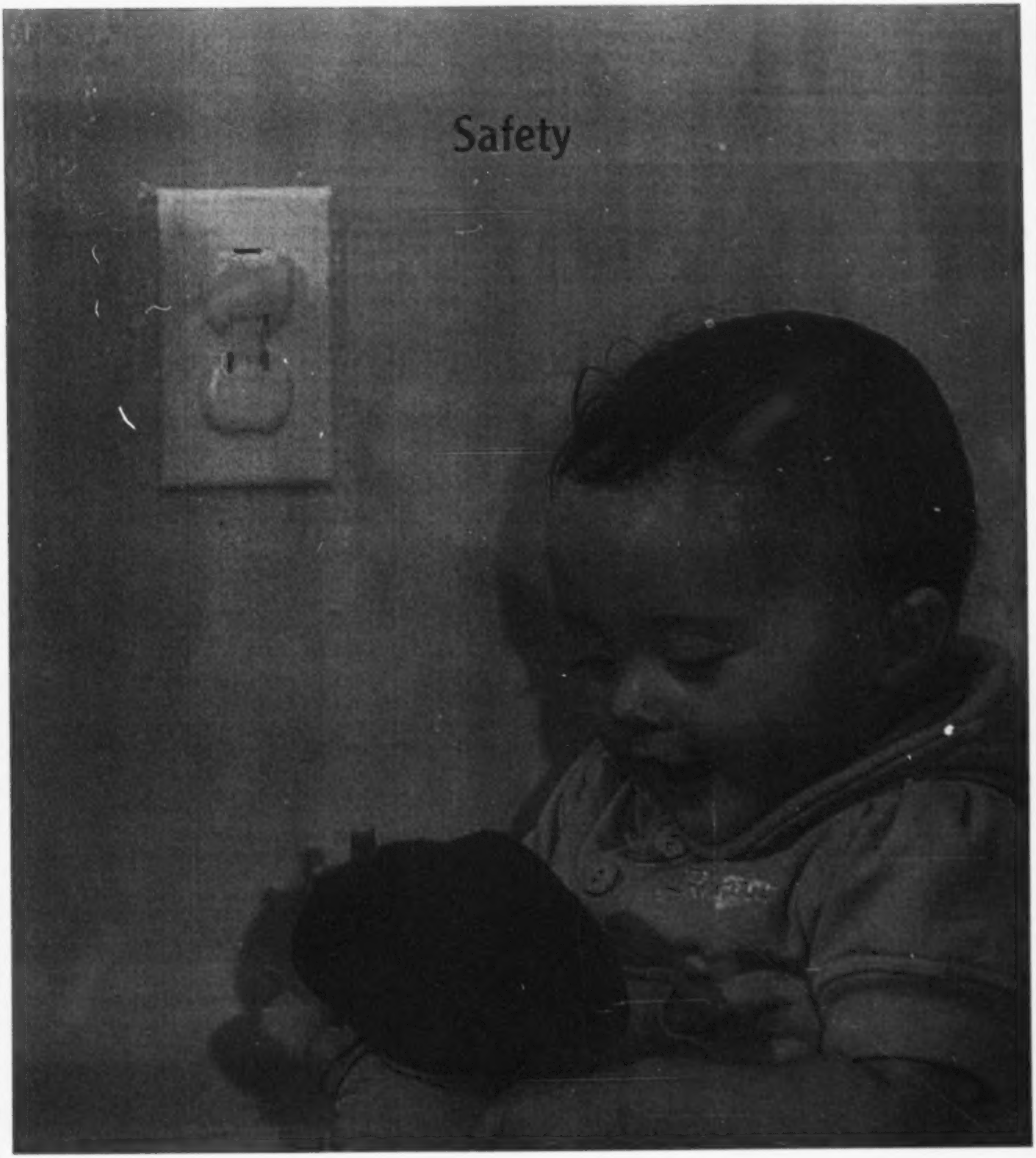
Safety



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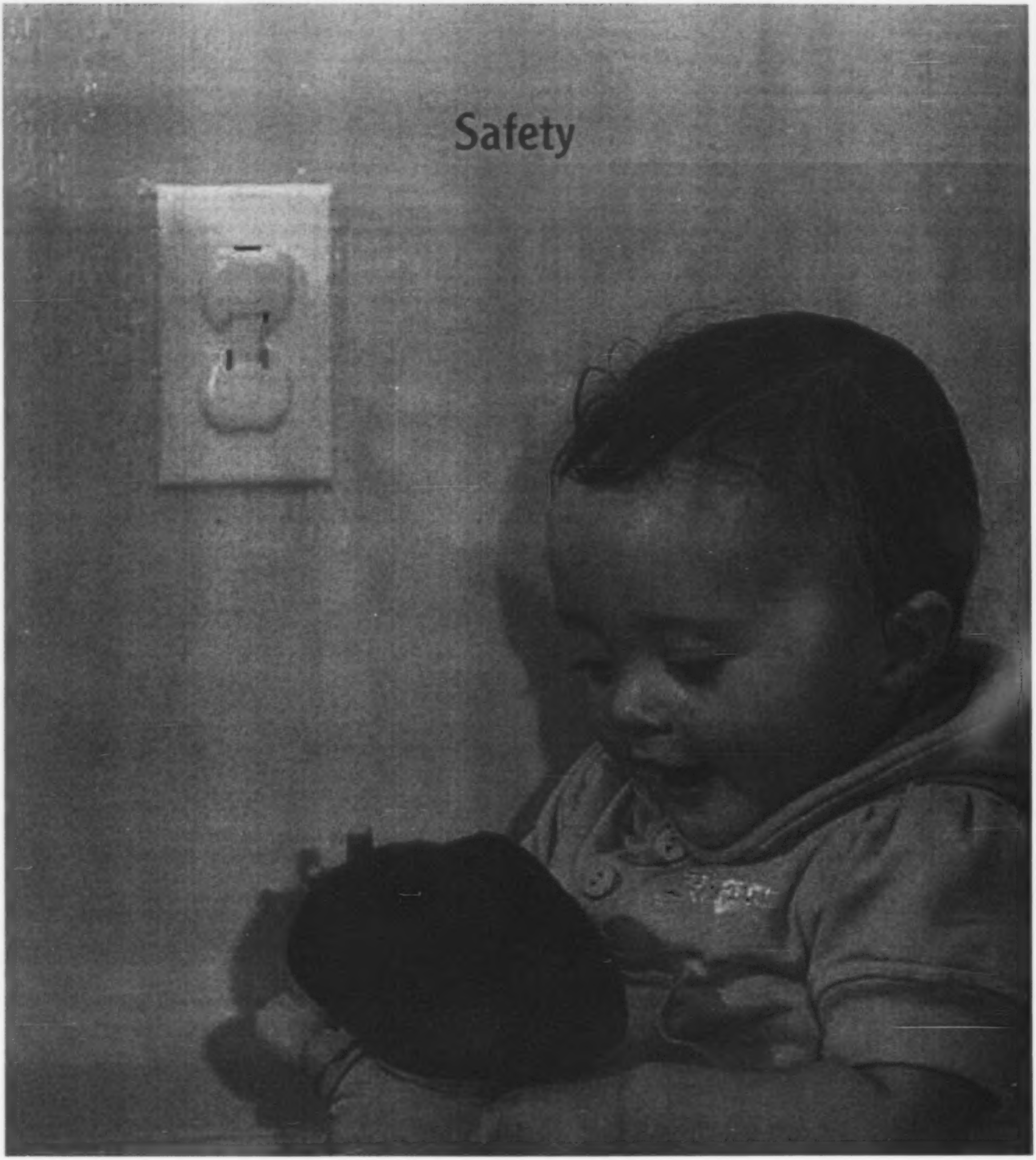
Safety



My baby is growing fast! She's moving around more every day. What can I do to keep her safe while she explores?

Babyproof early

Being alert to all the new skills your baby is learning is the best way to keep her safe. Your baby is interested in everything she sees. She needs to explore her world and her new skills help her to do it.

Your baby can move faster and reach higher than you might think. Now is the time to babyproof your home and think about preventing injuries as your baby begins to grow into an active toddler.

Babyproofing means making your home a clean and safe place for your baby to explore.

The best place to start babyproofing is on your hands and knees. Pretend to be a baby and crawl around your home. Look at everything from your baby's point of view.

In this section you'll find a checklist to help you find and fix the things in your home that could hurt your baby. Check every room in your home for dangers.

Your baby depends on you to make her world safe.

Double Check

You'll find information about sun safety, avoiding insect bites, and pet safety in the *"Family safety"* section of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

Double Check

You'll find more information about your baby's growth and development on **pages 10-24** in this book.

CAUTION!

Your baby is always safest when someone is watching her. It only takes a second for a baby to get hurt.

Keep a close watch on your baby when visiting other people's homes. Their homes may not be babyproof.

Babyproofing Checklist

In Canada, more children die or go to the hospital because of injuries than for any other reason.

Nine out of 10 injuries in the home can be prevented.

Babyproofing your home, keeping a close watch on your baby, and using the right car seat can prevent many injuries.

Check every room in your home.

Falling

***LOOK FOR:** Things that could cause a fall*

- ○ *Put gates at the top and bottom of stairs.* Make sure that the gates at the top of the stairs are screwed into the wall. Never use a pressure gate at the top of the stairs.
- ○ Be sure your high chair, wagon, swing, and stroller have safety straps. Fasten the safety strap whenever your baby uses them. Never leave your baby alone in a highchair, wagon, swing, or stroller.
- ○ *Make sure that there is nothing near windows or balcony rails that your baby could climb on*—for example, no furniture or flowerpots.
- ○ *Put window guards on windows above the ground floor.* Or fix the windows so they can't open more than 10 cm (4 in). Screens in windows are not enough to keep your baby safe.
- ○ *Look for sharp edges on furniture.* Tape foam over the edges or remove the furniture from the room.
- ○ *Keep large toys and stuffed animals out of cribs and playpens.* Your baby could climb up on them and fall out.
- ○ *Put the crib mattress at its lowest level* so your baby can't climb or fall out.
- ○ *Keep drawers closed* so your baby can't climb them.
- ○ *Clean up spills and puddles quickly.* Babies can slip and fall.
- ○ *Use a non-slip mat in the bathtub.* Use a non-slip mat on the bathroom floor.

CAUTION!

Never use a baby walker with wheels. Babies have fallen down stairs and suffered serious head injuries in these walkers.

They are so dangerous that they can't be sold in stores in Canada anymore.

If you have one, throw it away. If you see one, don't buy it.

Pulling down

LOOK FOR: *Things your baby could pull down on himself*

○ *Check for dangling cords on lamps and appliances.* If your baby can reach the cord, he can pull down a lamp, teakettle, hair dryer, or toaster. Tape cords to the wall or keep them out of reach.

○ *Remove tablecloths and placemats.*

○ *Make sure TVs, TV stands, bookcases, and other heavy furniture are attached to something* so your baby can't pull them over onto himself. For example, some bookcases can be bolted to the wall.

Burning or scalding

LOOK FOR: *Things that could burn or scald your baby*

○ *Make sure the water from your taps is not hotter than 49°C (120°F).* You can put a scald protector on the bathtub faucet. This shuts off the water if it becomes too hot. You can find out how to adjust your water temperature by contacting Child Safety Link or Safe Kids Canada (contact information, page 126).

○ *Cooked or heated food for baby can be cold, room temperature, or warm—not hot.* If you warm your baby's food, stir it well to be sure there are no hot spots.

○ *Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove when cooking.* Use the back burners whenever you can.

○ *Be sure that there is a working smoke detector on every floor of your home.*

○ *Cover all electrical outlets with plastic outlet covers that fit tightly and are very difficult to remove.*

○ *Keep your baby in a safe place where you can see him while you are busy in the kitchen—for example in a high chair or playpen.* Keep hot foods and liquids out of reach.

○ *Don't carry hot liquids while you're holding your baby.* Use a travel mug with a tight lid for hot drinks even when you're at home.

○ *Keep your baby away from all heat sources.* This includes: wood stoves, fireplaces, space heaters, and radiators.

CAUTION!

Your baby's skin is thin and very sensitive. It burns very quickly and easily.

Suffocating

LOOK FOR: Things that could suffocate your baby

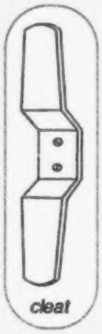
○ *Use a toy box without a lid.* If your toy box has a lid that you can't remove, make sure it has large air holes so that if your baby gets trapped inside, he can still breathe.

○ *Keep plastic bags out of reach.* Tie a knot in the middle of the bag so your baby can't put it over her head.

Choking

LOOK FOR: Things that could choke your baby

○ *Keep cords from curtains and blinds up high, out of your baby's reach.* Attach a *cleat* to the wall and wrap the cord round it. Or use a clip clothespin, or twist tie to wrap them up out of reach. If your cord has a loop at the bottom, cut it open and knot the ends of the two cords. Be sure there are no cords within reach of your baby's crib.



○ *Make sure there are no long strings, belts or ties on your baby's clothing.* Soothers should not be attached to your baby's clothes with long strings or cords.

○ *Check all toys for small pieces that might come off.* Check for broken toys and remove them.

○ *Store all small objects out of your baby's reach.* This includes things like coins, buttons, small batteries, keys, and earrings. Store purses and backpacks out of reach. There are lots of things in a purse or backpack that your baby could choke on. Remember: anything your baby can pick up will go in his mouth.

○ *Keep latex balloons out of reach.* Balloons and pieces of popped balloons can choke your baby. Don't let your baby put balloons or balloon pieces in his mouth.

○ *Store older children's toys where your baby can't get at them.* Teach your other children to keep small toys away from the baby.

○ *Remove all mobiles and hanging toys from the crib* as soon as your baby can sit up.

CAUTION!

When your baby starts to eat solid food, make sure that it is mashed, grated, or chopped so there are no pieces big enough for her to choke on.

Don't give your baby blobs or spoonfuls of thick, sticky foods—like peanut butter.

Babies should never have nuts, popcorn, hard candy, or gum.

You'll find information on feeding your baby on pages 62-93.

Poisoning

***LOOK FOR:** Things that could poison your baby*

○ *Keep dangerous products out of sight and up high.* Put childproof latches or locks on any cupboard your child could reach. Store purses and backpacks out of reach. Things that can poison your baby include:

- Drugs—medicine, vitamins, legal and illegal drugs of any kind
- Alcohol—beer, wine, any kind of alcohol
- Baby oil
- Cigarettes and cigarette butts
- Cosmetics and personal care products—like perfume, shampoo, aftershave, and nail polish remover
- Cleaning products
- Bug or weed killer
- Paint and paint thinner
- Gasoline and antifreeze

○ *Keep plants out of your baby's reach.* Some are poisonous. You can find more information about poisonous plants in **Plants: A Guide for Poison Prevention.** You can get a copy from Child Safety Link (contact information, page 126).

○ *Keep anything that could poison your child in its original container.* This way you will always know what it is and won't confuse it with another product.

Added info...

Keep the number of the IWK Regional Poison Centre near all your phones. You'll find these numbers on page 126.

In an emergency, call 911.

Baby furniture

***LOOK FOR:** Baby furniture that could hurt your baby*

○ *Be sure all baby furniture is clean, sturdy, and meets safety standards.* Cribs, playpens, and strollers should be CSA approved. They should have a label that says who made it and when it was made. The label should also give a model number.

○ Cribs must be made after 1986.

○ Strollers must be made after 1985.

○ Playpens must be made after 1976.

Toys

***LOOK FOR:** Toys that could hurt your baby*

○ Check your baby's toys to be sure they are safe for his age.

○ Check toys often to be sure there are no loose or broken parts.

○ Make sure your baby's toys are too big to swallow or choke on. Anything that can fit through a toilet paper roll is too small for your baby to play with.

○ Be sure that toys have no strings or cords that are long enough to wrap around your baby's neck.

○ Be sure that toys are not so loud that they could damage your baby's hearing. If a toy is loud enough that you have to raise your voice above the noise, it's too loud for your baby.

Added info...

You can find information about toys that have been recalled from Consumer Product Safety (contact information, page 126) or from Family Resource Centres (contact information, page 124).

Added info...

Noisy toys can hurt your baby's hearing.

To avoid damage to your baby's hearing:

- Reduce the amount of time they spend playing with noisy toys.
- Keep a close eye on your baby while he plays with noisy toys.
- Cover the speaker with tape to block some of the sound.
- Don't put batteries in the toy.
- If there are volume controls, turn them to low.

Your baby doesn't need noisy toys. There are lots of other things he'll enjoy, like books, blocks, and puzzles.

Lead poisoning

Lead-based paint

Lead-based paint is a serious health hazard. Lead poisoning can cause anemia. It can also damage the brain and nervous system, resulting in learning disabilities.

Lead-based paint is especially dangerous:

- When it is chipping or flaking
- When it is in a place that babies can reach or chew on

If your home was built before 1960 it is likely that it has lead-based paint.

If your home was built after 1980, paints used indoors would be lead free, but there may be lead in the paint used on the outside.

If your home was built after 1992, both indoor and outdoor paints will be lead free.

If you think there is lead-based paint in your home, contact Poison Control for advice on what to do (contact information, page 126).

For more information on lead-based paints, contact Health Canada (contact information, page 126).

Lead in toys

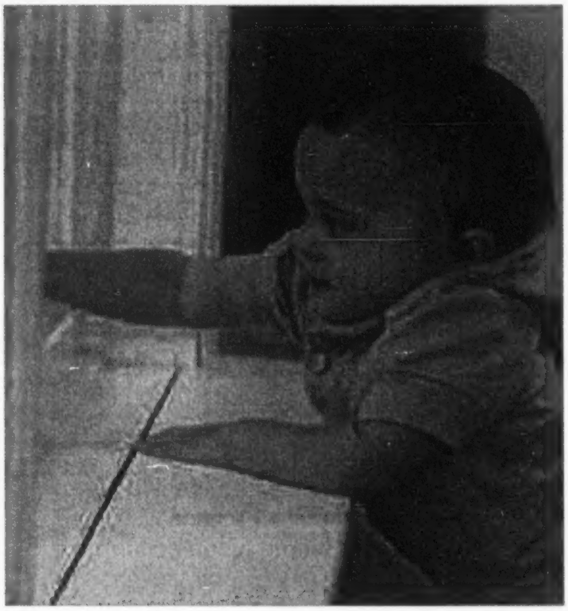
Canada has laws that regulate the amount of lead in children's toys. You can check with Consumer Product Safety to find out about any toys that have been recalled because of high levels of lead (contact information, page 126). Family Resource Centres also often have information about product recalls (contact information, page 124).

Lead in water

Whether you get your water from a well or a municipal water supply, if there is lead in your pipes, pumps, or plumbing, Health Canada recommends that you let your cold water tap run for about 2 minutes every morning—or just flush your toilet. This will flush out lead and copper that could build up in the water overnight.

Hot water will draw out more lead and other minerals that may be in your plumbing. Always use cold tap water for drinking, cooking, filling your kettle, and mixing formula.

Some municipalities in Nova Scotia keep track of which houses get their water through lead pipes. You can call your municipal water supply to see if they know whether your pipes are lead.



Car safety

Car crashes are a major cause of death and serious injury. When you use the right car seat in the right way, you can reduce the risk that your baby will be hurt or killed by 70%.

In Nova Scotia, it is the law that your baby must be in a car seat whenever she is in a car or truck. This includes **ALL** cars—for example, your own car, taxis, and grandparents' or caregivers' cars.

You'll find information on how to choose and install car seats in **Keep Kids Safe: A Parent's Guide to Car Seats.** You'll find a copy in the back of **Loving Care: Parents and Families.**

CAUTION!

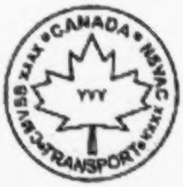
Never leave your baby alone in a car, even for a few minutes.

CAUTION!

Buy your baby's car seat in Canada.

Car seats purchased outside of Canada—or on-line from non-Canadian sources—do not meet Canada's safety standards.

It is illegal to use any car seat that does not carry Canada's national safety mark.



Look for this safety mark.

Bath safety

When your baby can sit up straight by herself, she's old enough to move to the regular bathtub.

To keep your baby safe while bathing:

- **Never leave your baby alone in the tub, even for a second.** Babies can drown very quickly in very little water. Don't turn your back—pay close attention while your baby is in the tub. Be sure you have everything you need before you put your baby in the tub. If you have to answer the phone or the door, wrap your baby in a towel and take her with you. Don't leave your baby alone with another child.
- **Use a non-slip mat in the tub.**
- **Put a padded cover on the faucet.** Face your baby away from the faucets so she's less likely to reach for them.
- **Run the water before you put the baby in the tub.** Make sure it's the right temperature —lukewarm, not hot or cold.
- **Run about 5 or 8 cm (2 or 3 inches) of water.**
- **Test the water temperature with your elbow before you put the baby in the tub.** The water should be cooler than you would use for your own bath.
- **Drain the tub as soon as bath time is over.**

Babies often enjoy playing in water. This is a good time for your baby to learn about splashing, pouring, squirting, and squeezing. Bath time can be fun for you both!

CAUTION!

Be sure any electrical items—like hairdryers—are kept unplugged and away from the tub. They can cause electric shock if they fall into water while plugged in.

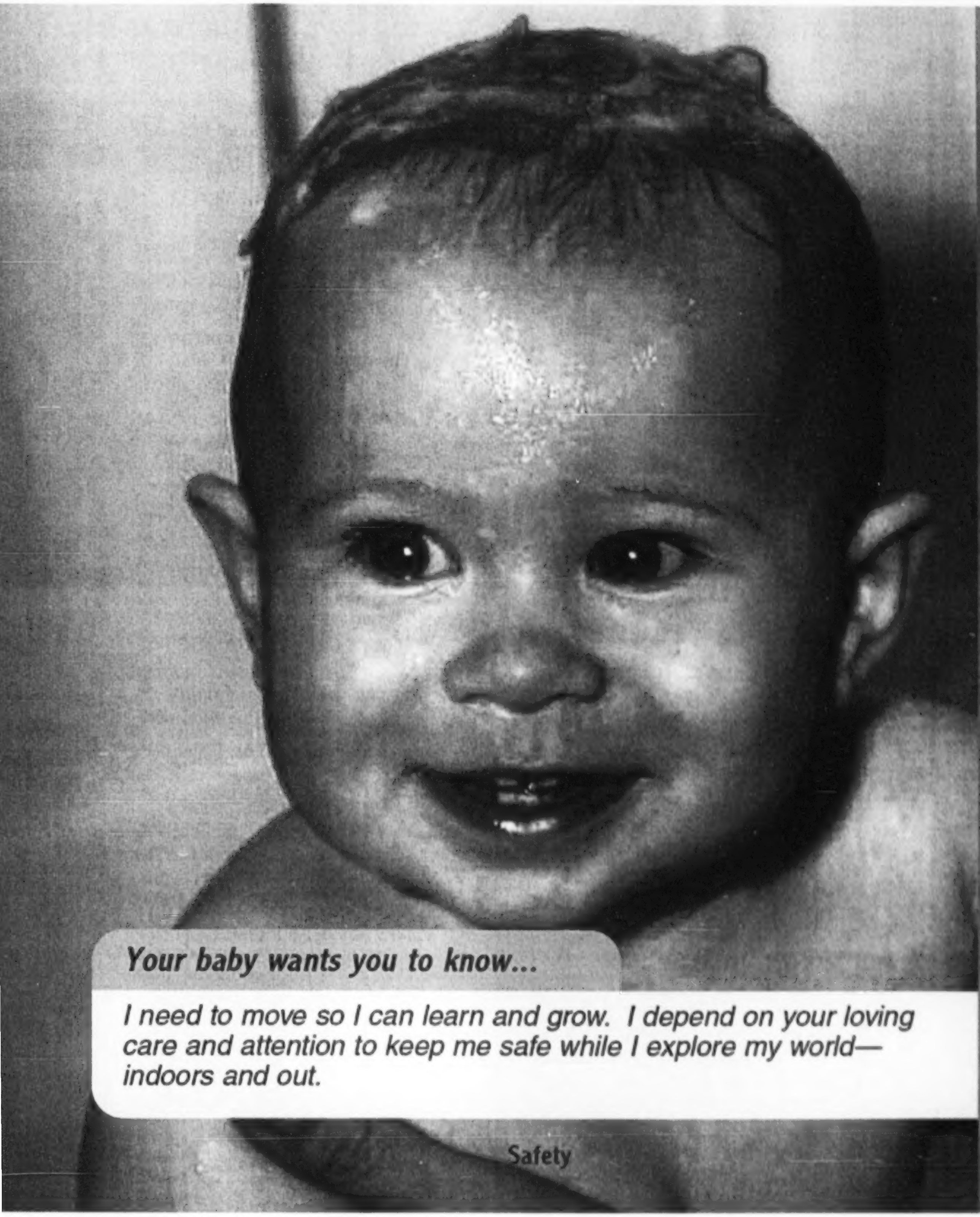
CAUTION!

Don't use a baby bath seat or bath ring in the tub.

Health Canada warns parents that baby bath seats can cause drowning.

Added info...

Babies love bath toys! To prevent mold and mildew, dry the toys and store them in a mesh bag or open container.



Your baby wants you to know...

I need to move so I can learn and grow. I depend on your loving care and attention to keep me safe while I explore my world—indoors and out.

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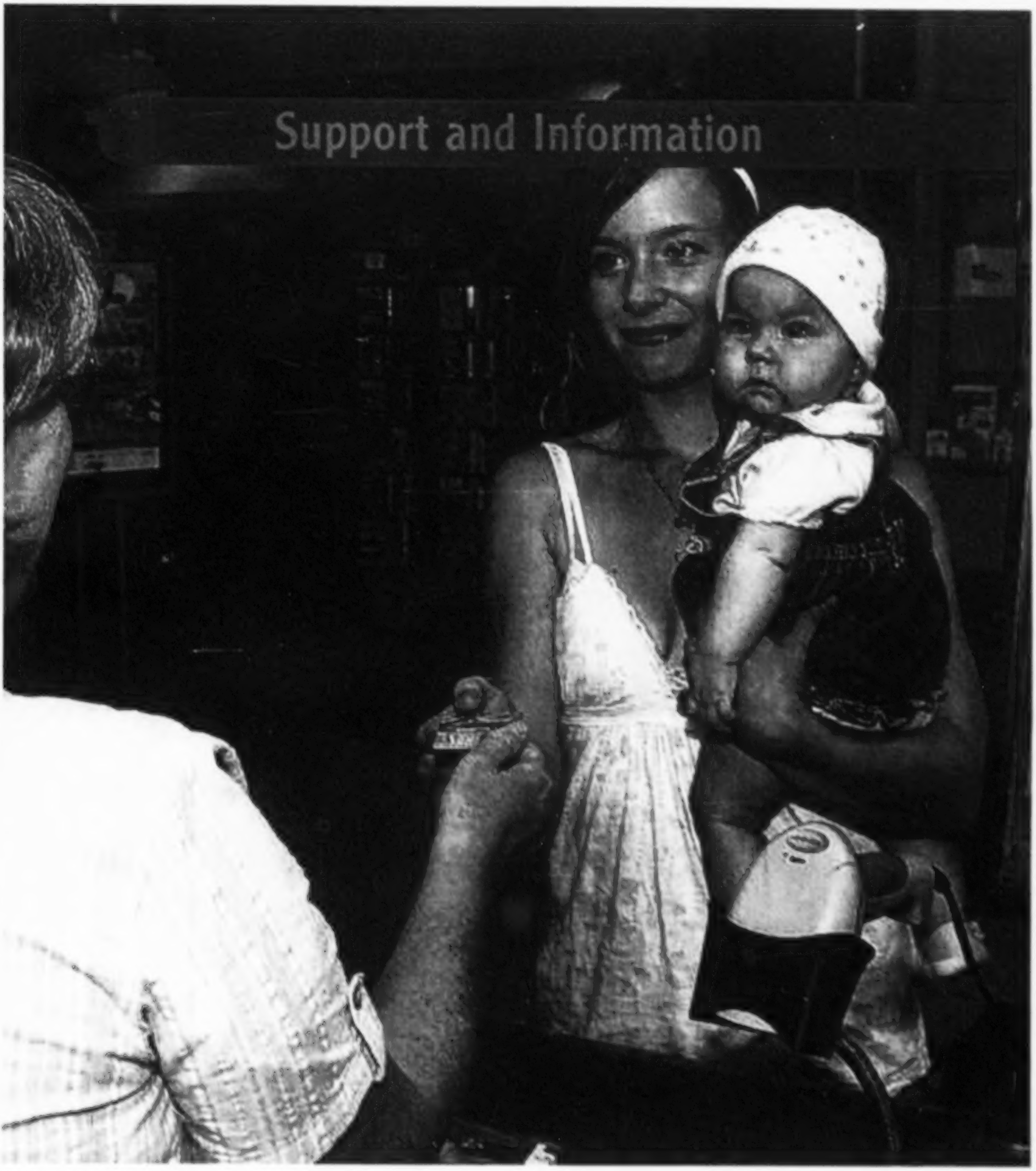
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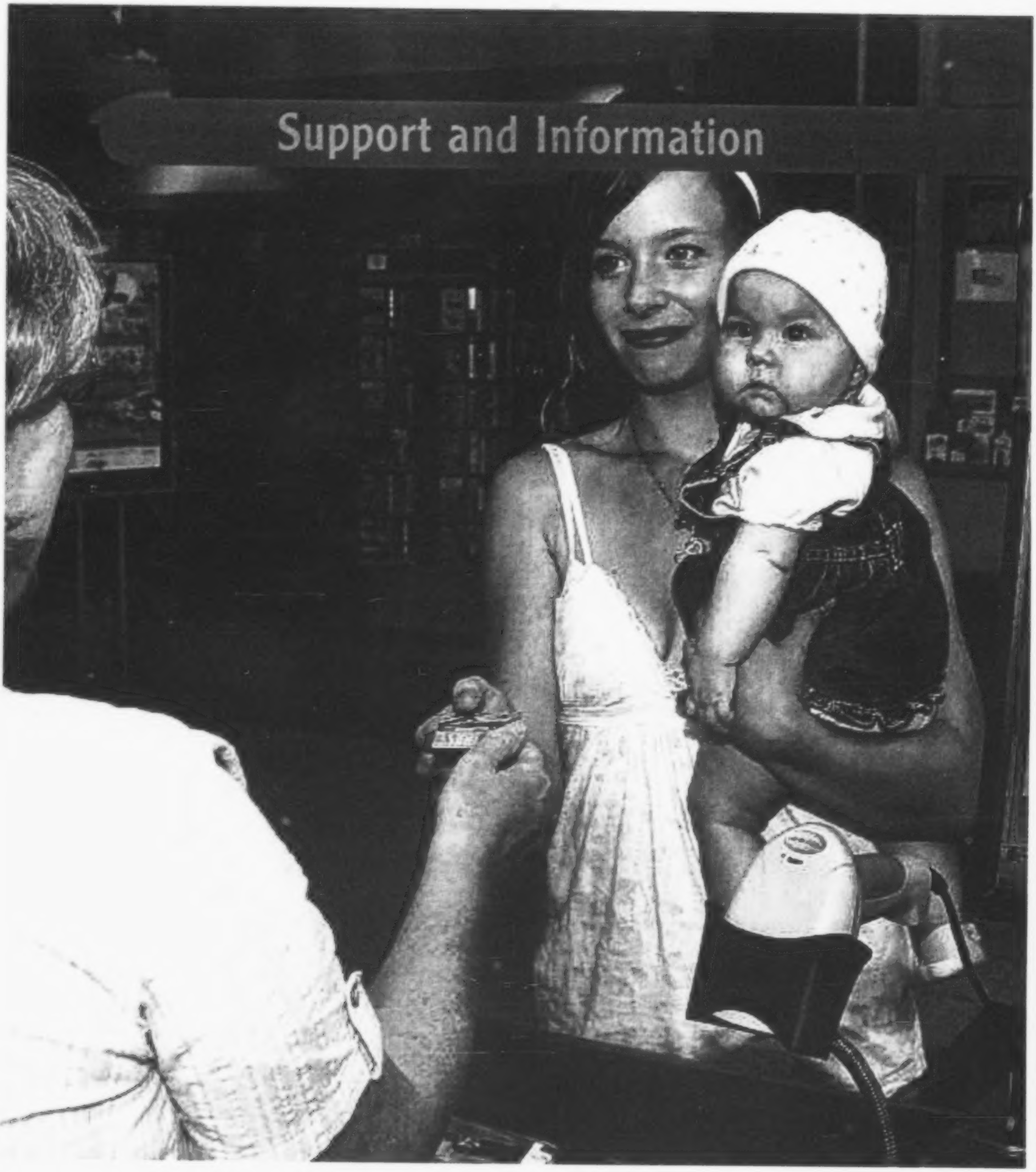
Support and Information

Provincial services

Department of Community Services

You can connect with local Community Services offices through their website: www.gov.ns.ca/coms Click on "Find your local office" in the left hand column.

- Western Regional Office: (902) 679-6715
- Northern Regional Office: (902) 755-7023
- Central Regional Office: (902) 424-4754
- Eastern Regional Office: (902) 563-3302

Department of Heath Promotion and Protection

You'll find information and resources for health promotion in Nova Scotia.

Website: www.gov.ns.ca/hpp

District Health Authorities

The District Health Authority website is a good source of information about local programs and services.

- Annapolis Valley Health
  www.avdha.nshealth.ca
- Cape Breton District Health Authority
  www.cbdha.nshealth.ca
- Capital Health
  www.cdha.nshealth.ca
- Colchester East Hants Health Authority
  www.cehha.nshealth.ca
- Cumberland Health Authority
  www.cha.nshealth.ca
- Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority
  www.erhb.ns.ca
- Pictou County Health Authority
  www.pcha.nshealth.ca
- South Shore Health
  www.ssdha.nshealth.ca
- South West Nova Health
  www.swndha.nshealth.ca
- IWK Health Centre
  www.iwk.nshealth.ca

Doctors accepting new patients

You can find family doctors who are accepting new patients at:

- Website: www.gov.ns.ca/health/physicians

MSI Children's Oral Health Program

- Phone: 1-888-846-9199 (Toll Free)
- Phone in Halifax Regional Municipality: (902) 832-3253

Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres

Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres are located in 25 communities across the province. Check this website to find one near you.

- Website: www.nshsc.ns.ca

Pharmacare

Family Pharmacare Program

- Website: www.nspharmacare.ca
- Phone: 1-877-330-0323 (Toll free)

Low Income Pharmacare for Chidren

- Website: www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/Pharmacareforchildren.html
- Phone: 1-866-424-1269 (Toll free)

Public Health Services

Amherst	1-800-767-3319 or 667-3319
Annapolis Royal	532-0490
Antigonish	863-2743
Arichat	226-2944
Baddeck	295-2178
Barrington Passage	637-2430
Berwick	538-3700
Bridgewater	543-0850
Canso	366-2925
Chester	275-3581
Cheticamp	224-2410
Digby	245-2557
Elmsdale	883-3500
Glace Bay	842-4050
Guysborough	533-3502
Halifax Regional Municipality	481-5800
Head of Jeddore	889-2143
Inverness	258-1920
Liverpool	354-5737
Lunenburg	634-4014
Meteghan	645-2325
Middle Musquodoboit	384-2370
Middleton	825-3385
Neil's Harbour	336-2295
New Germany	644-2710
New Glasgow	752-5151
New Waterford	862-2204
Port Hawkesbury	625-1693
St Peter's	1-888-272-0096 (Voice mail only)
Sheet Harbour	885-2470
Shelburne	875-2623
Sherbrooke	522-2212
Sydney	563-2400
Sydney Mines	736-6245
Truro	893-5820
Windsor	798-2264
Wolfville	542-6310
Yarmouth	742-7141

Other resources and services

Breastfeeding Support

- La Leche League Canada
  Website: www.lllc.ca

Child Care

You can find information about childcare in your community through your local Public Health Services office or Family Resource Centre.

To find information about licensed childcare and approved home day care, contact Early Childhood Development Services.
Phone: (902) 424-3430

You can also check the Directory of Childcare Services at:

- Website: www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/childcare/directories/facilitysearch.aspx

Early Intervention Nova Scotia

This website will help you locate the Early Intervention program nearest your home.

- Website: www.earlyintervention.net

Family Resource Centres

Contact Public Health Services for other Family Resource Centres and resources in your community or check the Directory of Nova Scotia Family Resource Centres:

- Website: www.nscouncilfamily.org/FRC_Directory/Index.htm

In communities

Amherst

- Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre (Cumberland)
  11 Elmwood Drive , Amherst
  Phone: (902) 667-7250

Annapolis Valley-Hants County

- Annapolis Valley-Hants Community Action Program for Children offers programs in several sites.
  Phone: (902) 582-1375

Antigonish

- Kids First Family Resource Program (Antigonish County)
  27 St. Andrew Street, Antigonish
  Phone: (902) 863-3848

Bridgetown

- Annapolis County Family Resource Centre
  26 Bay Road, Suite 202, Bridgetown
  Phone: (902) 665-2622

Bridgewater

- Family Support Centre
  156 York Street, Bridgewater
  Phone: (902) 543-1301

Chester

- Chester and Area Family Resource Centre
  Phone: (902) 275-4347

Digby

- Digby County Family Resource Centre
  19 Prince William Street, Digby
  Phone: (902) 245-6464

Guysborough

- Kids First Family Resource Program (Guysborough County)
  105 Queen Street, Guysborough
  Phone: (902) 533-3881

Halifax Regional Municipality

- Bayers Westwood Parent Resource Centre
  3499 McAlpine Avenue, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 454-9444
- Dartmouth Family Centre
  107 Albro Lake Road, Dartmouth
  Phone: (902) 464-8234
- Eastern Shore Family Resource Centre
  5228 Highway 7, Suite 203, Porters Lake Shopping Centre
  Phone: (902) 827-1461
- Fairview Family Resource Centre
  3524 Dutch Village Road, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 443-9569
- IWK Family Resource Library
  5850/5980 University Avenue (Level 2)
  Phone: (902) 470-8982
- Memory Lane Family Place
  22 Memory Lane, Lower Sackville
  Phone: (902) 864-6363
- Mi'kmaq Child Development Centre
  2162 Gottingen Street, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 422-7850
- Musquodoboit Valley Family Resource Centre
  12280 Highway 224, Middle Musquodoboit
  (above Haverstock Pharmacy)
  Phone: (902) 384-2794
- North End Parent Resource Centre
  5475 Uniacke Street, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 492-0133
- Parents and Children Together Resource Centre
  1114 Cole Harbour Road, Suite 102, Dartmouth
  Phone: (902) 434-8952

- Preston and Area Family Resource Centre
  1900 Highway 7, Suite 501, East Preston
  Business Centre, East Preston
  Phone: (902) 462-7266
- Single Parent Centre
  3 Sylvia Avenue, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 479-3031

Liverpool

- Queen's County Family Resource Centre
  108 College Street, Liverpool
  Phone: (902) 354-7176

New Glasgow

- Kids First, Pictou County
  610 East River Road, New Glasgow
  Phone: (902) 755-5437

New Ross

- New Ross Family Resource Centre
  4689 Highway 12, New Ross
  Phone: (902) 689-2414

Shelburne

- King Street Family Resource Centre
  35 King Street, Shelburne
  Phone: (902) 875-3256
  Toll free: 1-800-563-3256

Sydney

- Cape Breton Family Place Resource Centre
  106 Townsend Street, Sydney
  Phone: (902) 562-5616

Truro

- Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre
  (Colchester County)
  129 Arthur Street, Truro
  Phone: (902) 895-0200

Windsor

- Family Resource Centre of West Hants
  78 Thomas Street, War Memorial Building
  Phone: (902) 798-5961

Yarmouth

- Parents' Place - Yarmouth Family
  Resource Centre
  34 Barnard Street, Yarmouth
  Phone: (902) 749-1718

Acadian/Francophone Family Resource Centres

Saulnierville

- Centre de ressources et de services à
  la famille, Saulnierville
  Phone: (902) 769-5854

First Nations Family Supports

- Native Council of Nova Scotia
  Child Help Initiative Program (CHIP)
  Locations in Truro, Liverpool, and
  Sydney
  Phone: 1-800-565-4372 (Toll free)
  Website: www.ncns.ca
- Mi'kmaq Child Development Centre
  2162 Gottingen Street, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 422-7850

Military Family Resource Centres

- Halifax site
  Halifax Military Community Centre,
  Connolly Street, Windsor Park, Halifax
  Phone: (902) 427-7780
- Greenwood Site
  AVM Morfee Centre, School Road,
  Box 582, Greenwood
  Phone: (902) 765-561
- Shearwater site
  Hampton Gray Memorial Centre, just off
  Labrador Avenue, 12 Wing Shearwater
  Phone: (902) 720-1885

- Sydney site:
  The Halifax MFRC operates a part-time office in the garrison at Victoria Park in Sydney
  1 Desbarres Street, Victoria Park, Sydney
  Phone: (902) 563-7100 ext 7107

The MFRC can be reached by telephone 24/7 at: (902) 427-7788

Food Safety Resources

- FightBac offers information on handling and storing food safely.
  Website: www.canfightbac.org/en/
  (Click on "Downloads")
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada offers information about seafood and health.
  Website: www.seafoodcanada.gc.ca/health
- Health Canada offers more information about mercury levels in seafood.
  Website: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/chem-chim/environ/mercur/cons-adv-etud-eng.php

Literacy Resources

- Read to Me Program:
  Website: www.readtome.ca
- Regional libraries: www.library.ns.ca
  - South Shore Regional Library
    (902) 543-2548 OR
    1-877-455-2548 (Toll free)
  - Western Counties Regional Library
    (902) 742-2486
  - Annapolis Valley Regional Library
    (902) 665-2995
  - Colchester-East Hants Regional Library
    (902) 895-0235 OR within Atlantic Canada: 1-888-632-9088 (Toll free)
  - Cumberland Regional Library
    (902) 667-2135
  - Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library
    1-866 779-7761 (Toll free)
  - Eastern Counties Regional Library
    (902) 747-2597
  - Cape Breton Regional Library
    (902) 562-3279
  - Halifax Public Libraries
    (902) 490-5744

Safety Resources

- Child Safety Link
  Phone: (902) 470-6496
  or 1-866-288-1388 (Toll free)
  Website: www.childsafetylink.ca
  (Take a virtual home safety tour. Click on "Parents", then "Home Safety".)
- Consumer Product Safety
  (For information about product recalls)
  Phone: 1-866-662-0666 (Toll free)
  Website: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/advisories-avis/index_e.html
- Health Canada
  (For information about lead-based paint)
  Website: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/prod/paint-peinture_e.html
- IWK Regional Poison Centre
  For non-emergencies and information about poisons:
  Phone: 1-800-565-8161 (Toll free)
  In HRM: (902) 470-8161
  In an emergency: Phone 911
- Safe Kids Canada
  Website: www.safekidscanada.ca

- Transport Canada
  (For car seat safety information)
  Phone: 1-800-333-0510 (Toll free)
  Website: www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety
  (Click on "Child Safety")
- Canadian Red Cross Society—
  Nova Scotia
  Phone: (902) 463-5646 or
  1-888-577-7267 (Toll free)
  Website: www.redcross.ca
- St. John Ambulance—Nova Scotia
  Phone: (902) 463-5046 or
  1-800-565-5056 (Toll free)
  Website: www.sja.ca

Smoking Resources

- Smoke-free Around Me
  Website: www.smokefreearoundme.ca
- Smokers' Helpline
  Phone: 1-877-513-5333 (Toll free)
  Website: www.smokershelpline.ca
- Addiction Services
  Website: www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/addictions

Thanks! 130

Thanks!

Thanks!

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- Geneviève Flynn, Resource Specialist, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection

Ad hoc Nutrition Working Group

- Tina Swinamer, Coordinator, Early Childhood Nutrition, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection
- Mary Daly, Public Health Nutritionist, Cape Breton District Health Authority
- Brenda Leenders, Public Health Nutritionist, Colchester East Hants District Health Authority
- Bonnie Anderson, Public Health Nutritionist, Capital District Health Authority
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- Christine Ellsworth, Psychologist, Preschool Pediatric Program, IWK Health Centre
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- Shelley Goodwin, Child pshycologist, Yarmouth Mental Health Centre, South West Nova District Health Authority
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- Melissa Hum, Executive Director, Bayer's Westwood Family Resource Centre
- Sandeep Kapur, M.D. Pediatric Allergist, Department of Pediatrics, Dalhousie University
- Michelle LeDrew, Health Promotion Manager and National Baby Friendly Initiative assessor candidate, Public Health Services, Capital District Health Authority
- Joyce Ledwedge, Neonatal Dietitian, IWK Health Centre
- Steve Machat, Manager, Tobacco Control, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection
- Marilyn MacPherson, M.D., Pediatric Physician, Colchester East Hants Health Authority
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Loving Care

Loving Care is given free of charge to all new parents in Nova Scotia. If you would like additional copies to share with friends or family outside of Nova Scotia, you can order them for a small fee from Nova Scotia Government Publications.

Website:
www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/publications/

Phone:
(902) 424-5200

Toll free:
1-800-670-4357

Loving Care

6 to 12 Months

2009

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